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THE 'BRITANNIA' AND HER CONTEMPORARIES

By B. HECKSTALL-SMITH AND
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THE BRITANNIA

A VIEW FROM THE LANDING STAGE OF THE ROYAL YACHT SQUADRON

THE 'BRITANNIA'
AND HER
CONTEMPORARIES

BY

B. HECKSTALL-SMITH

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THE 'BRITANNIA' AND HER CONTEMPORARIES

THE 'BRITANNIA' AND HER CONTEMPORARIES

CHAPTER I

THE BEGINNING IN 1893

Yacht building may be called the poetry of shipbuilding.
G. L. Watson

WHEN the Britannia was built in the year eighteen hundred and ninety-three we were approaching the end of the Victorian era. Many things were different then, the world did not move at such a deuce of a pace, everything was more leisurely—went slower—yachts were slower. I remember how often we used to get utterly becalmed in light winds, and how impossible and tedious it was to try to turn to windward in gentle breezes against the tide. When I was a boy the British idea of a racing yacht was the 'plank-on-edge', the narrowest thing with an immense lead keel, and she was covered with a cloud of more or less inefficient sail, but she was slow unless it blew pretty fresh. Then there came suddenly upon us 'The Britannia and her contemporaries', and the whole pastime of yacht-racing was changed. There dawned a new era in the science of yacht architecture about the time of the coming of the Britannia, and, indeed, in the art of sailing, and we discovered in the course of two or three years how to sail very much faster in light winds, and I might almost say how to sail twice as fast to windward in strong winds. For half a century before that time we had been plodding along slowly without the slightest idea what was wrong. Truly new yachts beat old ones generally because they had heavier lead keels

and bigger sails. The new yachts were of greater tonnage, but they evaded the primitive tonnage rules, so that those rules took no cognizance of their greater size; but whilst every season some new vessel appeared and won a great number of races to be regarded as a masterpiece, there was no astonishing alteration in the speed and weatherliness of yachts until the coming of the Britannia.

I am fully aware that the expert scientists and the musty historians will contradict me, and will name certain vessels built upon the new system a couple of years before the Britannia was launched. I knew all those yachts from 1890 to 1892, and raced in many of them myself, but I am not writing any detailed and dull history of 'the Y.R.A. Rules', a subject with which I have so long been connected. Quite to the contrary, I am going to spin a yarn of a different sort.

This sudden and astonishing change 'from slow to fast' in sailing yachts did not actually take place in a single season, nor do I mean it to be understood that it was immediately effected by one yacht, the Britannia, when she was built in 1893. The designers tried their hands first with small craft: 1-raters, 2½-raters, and so on, up to 40-raters, over a brief period of years; and then they produced the great cutters of 1893, of which the Britannia is now the sole survivor. She created the strongest impression upon yachtsmen in her first year, and I am justified in taking the Britannia as the best example of the change in the type of sailing yachts that then took place. With her advent the old slow type died and the new fast type was born.

What was the root of the change? What was the discovery? Scientists may object to the word 'discovery', but the evolution of type from 1890 to 1893 was so rapid that I may venture to use it. The Britannia and her contemporaries were built to skim over the waves and waters and not to plough through them. That, in everyday language, was the discovery.

George Watson designed the Britannia.

A few years before he designed her I do not think he had much inkling of the sudden change that was about to take place in the form or shape of the hulls of sailing yachts. Watson was a great master of the art of designing the construction or framework of yachts. He

THE BRITANNIA CLOSED IN A FRESH BREEZE UNDER WHOLE MAINSAIL AND JIB-HEADED TOPSAIL

was one of the first to combine lightness with strength. As long ago as 1881, before the new 'skimming' form of the Britannia was dreamt of, he attached the greatest importance to building the lightest possible framework in the narrow old-fashioned hulls of his yachts, which carried the heaviest possible lead keel. In that year—eleven winters before he designed Britannia—Watson said: 'Some yachting authorities assert that you have only to make the boats long enough to beat all existing racing craft, and it seems strange that with this knowledge in their possession they should not only have had sufficient self-denial to resist the building of certain successes, but have even gone the length of turning out duffers of normal dimensions. I think there is just a little more in it than that, and cannot believe that a 10-tonner, 80 feet long, could ever be a success. We have not exhausted the possibilities of *form* yet, and really know very little more about it than Solomon did, when he confessed his inability to understand "the way of a ship in the sea", and when we do arrive at perfection in shape we can set to, then, to look out for better material. The frames and beams, then, of my ideal ship shall be of aluminium, the plating below the water of manganese bronze, and top sides of aluminium; while I think it will be well to deck her, too, with that lightest of metals, as good yellow pine will soon only be seen in a museum. For ballast, of course, we should have nothing but platinum, unless the owner grudged the expense, when we might put the top tier of gold. By that date, however, I hope we won't care for sailing in such a sluggish element as the water. I firmly believe that some day the air will become as easily traversed as the earth or ocean.'

Twelve years after George Watson had made these prophetic remarks in Glasgow, practical demonstration was given that the 'possibilities of form' had not been exhausted, for an entirely new form was shown to the yachting public when the Britannia and the great cutters of 1893 appeared at Gravesend.

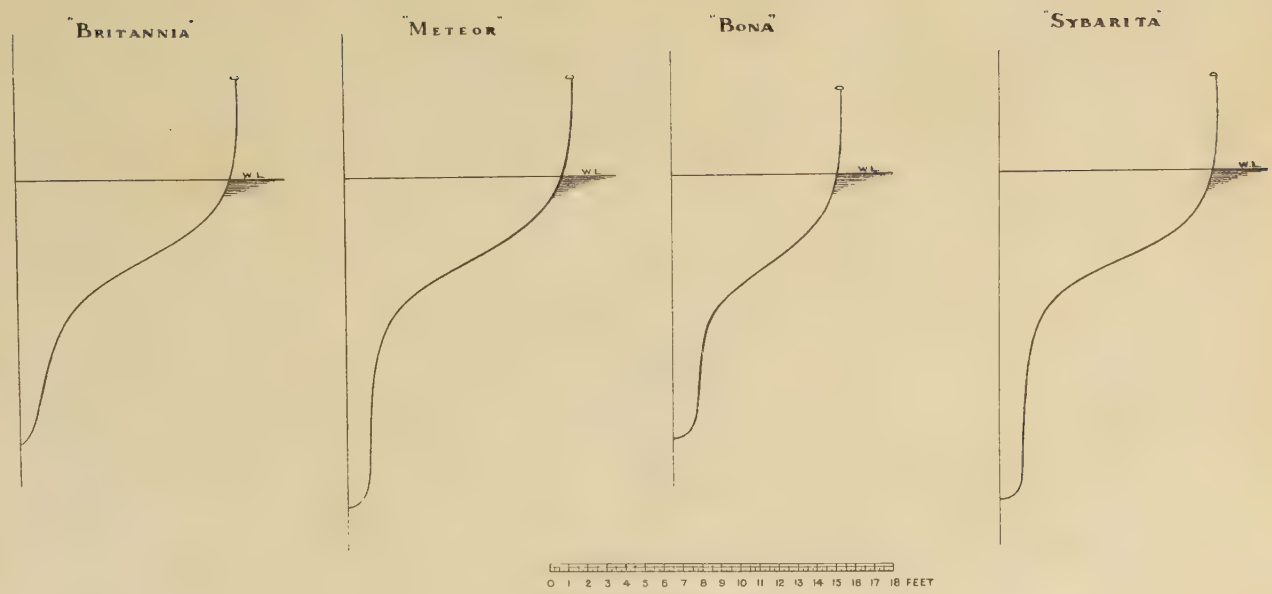
The strange thing about this 'hull form' demonstrated in the Britannia is, that whilst thirty-six years have passed since she sailed her first race, on which occasion I was anchored close to her off Gravesend in an old 40-tonner called the Terpsichore, this 'hull

form' is practically the same as that of her newest contemporaries. In the course of those thirty-six years I suppose I have sailed a thousand yacht-races in many more than a hundred different yachts. These yachts have been of many different 'forms'. They seem to have extended into many widely divergent shapes, some going to great extremes—some wild freaks and strange sailing machines unworthy to be called yachts, others most beautiful and graceful shapes—but as years have progressed, and as what George Watson called the 'possibilities of form' have been scientifically investigated, tested, and almost exhausted by the cleverest of the world's designers, the form has gradually returned to the original hull form of the Britannia. It is, as I have said, a 'skimming' and not a 'ploughing' form. The chief divergence has been in the direction of too much surface skimming and experimenting with yachts of dish-like shape, but after years of practical test that which yachtsmen by common consent regard as the ideal differs only in small detail from the shape of hull which Watson put into the Britannia.

When the Britannia sailed her first race, which was in the Thames, under the flag of the Royal Thames Yacht Club, on May 25, 1893, her opponents were the new cutters Valkyrie II, designed by Watson for Lord Dunraven, and the Calluna, designed by Fife for Mr. Peter Donaldson, and the older Iverna, belonging to Mr. John Jameson. Sailing on the same day, but in another class, was the famous Irex, which had been renamed Mabel. We thus saw three different types of yachts, the Britannia and Valkyrie were the *new* type—the skimmers; the Iverna was the medium type, a fairly beamy vessel with a clipper or 'swan' stem. The Irex was the old straight stem. Each type was well shown, for the yachts were each the best or last word of their class. My old friend the late Colonel Villiers Bagot was kind enough to give me a sail that day in his grand old 40-rater Creole, so I saw a good deal of the sport. Of course everybody criticized the new cutters. Everybody talked of nothing else but Britannia's and Valkyrie's bows. My readers will hardly believe me when I assure them that these vessels were universally condemned as being 'hideous machines'!

Dixon Kemp, writing in the *Field*, said: 'The feature in the new

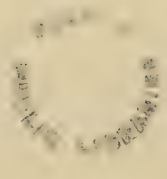
Midship Sections



BRITANNIA 1893; METEOR 1896; BONA 1897; SYBARITA 1900

Designed by George Watson

PLAN A



cutters which made the greatest impression on the spectators was undoubtedly the "finish off forward". The general verdict appeared to be that it was *gratuitously ugly*; and yet, after all, the form of a stem or cutwater is a matter of taste. The two Fife boats Calluna and Lais (the latter was a 40-rater) were near enough to the conventional form of the last ten years to escape unfavourable criticism. However, this is a very small matter, and the uneducated eye of the rising generation, untrammelled by comparisons, will grow to love the Viking stem, just as the past generations did the Swan stem.'

From the Lower Hope, where the races started, it took the yachts just over two hours to reach down the Thames to the Mouse Lightship. The old Irex, of course, could always reach at immense speed, and the Britannia only beat her by 46 seconds going down the river. They were all a shade faster than the Iverna, but until they became close-hauled, old gentlemen who love old types were chuckling and saying the new craft were nothing wonderful. Beating to windward back to Gravesend, it was a different story; immediately it was obvious that the new cutters were far more weatherly and faster. The Prince of Wales was on board the Britannia, with Lord Suffield and Admiral Keppel. Mr. William Jameson was in charge of the vessel and John Carter at the tiller. She made dozens of short tacks on the weather of Valkyrie, threshing up the Thames, and there was not a cable's length between them half-way through the Hope, but the Britannia was a certain winner when Valkyrie's bowsprit, in a hard puff, went short off at the gammoning. So that is the brief story of how the Britannia sailed her first race and won it. The Calluna was Mr. Fife's first big boat. She hung up on the mud turning up the river, and the bad luck of her first race seemed to follow her all through the season.

The Satanita, a great cutter designed by Mr. Soper for Mr. A. D. Clarke, came out a few days later at Harwich, and this completed the class. The Satanita was 97·7 feet on the waterline, and when she was first measured the Britannia was 87·8 feet L.W.L. With this extra 10 feet of length it may be imagined the 'Satan' was capable of great speed in certain conditions. On August 3, 1893, at Cowes, in a single-reef breeze the Satanita reached 45 miles at the rate of 12·25 knots, the tide being about equal with and against her. The Valkyrie's

speed on the same day was 11·8 knots, and the speed of the Valkyrie was practically the same as that of the Britannia.

After a lapse of thirty-five years I do not find the maximum speed of yachts has increased appreciably, if at all. When it blows great guns, and it is possible to drive a yacht for all she is worth, it is not always possible to get the maximum out of a modern yacht, because modern spars and gear may not stand the strain. I doubt very much if we can get this maximum out of our modern yachts with the new rigs like Mr. William Jameson and John Carter did with Britannia, and Tom Jay did with Satanita in 1893. It is exceedingly difficult to make comparisons, but I believe this to be a fact. On the other hand, our light modern gear and rig gives us a marked increase of speed in light, moderate, and even in fresh winds.

There are many yachting people who can remember all about the sport long before the Britannia was built, and I am afraid I am one of them, because the first good-sized yacht in which I sailed was the Vega. She belonged to a member of my family, and was a wholesome 36-ton yawl, in which I used to spend my holidays about the year 1884. On the other hand, the *début* of the Britannia on the Thames in 1893 was before the day of many of the greatest yachtsmen of the present time. As I go round the coast to the regattas in the summer I meet experienced yachting men—first-class helmsmen who know as much about the game as I do and can sail a yacht better—to whom the pre-Britannia years, or even Britannia's early career, is but hearsay. They can scarcely realize how the pastime of yachting has changed. I suppose the modern yachtsman can hardly imagine yachting without motor launches, motor dinghies, and outboard motors, to say nothing of an auxiliary motor engine stowed away somewhere in the after-cabin. Yachts had none of these conveniences. Steam yachts carried a smoky steam launch, or some extraordinarily up-to-date people had an abomination called a 'liquid fuel launch', which was highly praised until it suddenly squirted and spluttered a dark fluid over the long, multi-pleated skirts and huge-sleeved coats of the white serge dresses women wore in those days. No sailing yacht had electric light. The only lighting was candles, colza, and paraffin oil. The big cutters of 1893 were upwards of 200 tons Thames

THE SATANITA

DESIGNED BY MR. J. M. SOPER IN 1893

She was the fastest cutter on a reach ever built

measurement. The Britannia was 221, the great Satanita was 300 tons, and a 300-ton cutter is a pretty big vessel. None carried a steam launch. One was rowed ashore in the gig, a very long and beautiful boat, by four or more oarsmen. I think all the racing yachts of the first class of those days made their passages with three boats, gig, cutter, and dinghy. Some may not have used a 'cutter'.

Then imagine all the fleet of enormous yachts racing from Gravesend. Why nowadays I hear modern yacht owners making a fuss about racing from Southend or Harwich Harbour! Their boats are smaller and more handy, and if the wind is light everybody can get a friendly tow from one of the dozens of motor launches that are always close at hand. It was wonderful the way the yachts used to be handled when boxing about before or after a race. I can see Tom Jay now steering the Satanita with her immense tiller, and making cross-tacks up Gravesend Reach and past the old converted chalkpit called Rosherville Gardens—where there were strange goings-on of an evening—with nothing set but the jib and foresail. And what excitement there was over this River Thames racing when each year the new racing cutters came to London river to sail their first match. Hundreds of members of the Royal Thames Yacht Club were present, there was a special train from London to Gravesend, and a red-coated brass band on board a paddle steamboat playing Gilbert and Sullivan's music. The races from Gravesend round the Mouse Lightship in those days were amongst the best and most sporting events on the coast; they were given by three yacht clubs, the Royal Thames, the Royal London, and the New Thames, a club which had a picturesque Georgian club-house facing the river at Rosherville. Of course the river was a bit crowded with craft. On the very day Britannia sailed her first race I was racing in the Creole, and had experience of this. We were racing in a handicap match against the Irex, Columbine, Castanet, and Siola. The Irex, then called Mabel, broke her topmast in Sea Reach. The crack 40-raters Vendetta, Lais, and Varuna worked past us, making short tacks up the Thames on the flood tide, and there was a bit of a crowd; the nobler cutters Britannia and Valkyrie in a glorious sing-song race were hard at it half an hour ahead, the sun was shining over the mists of London, the smart south-west wind

brought the strains of the brass band from the club steamer—the bandsmen now doing their best, and well-nigh foxed, for the afternoon was getting late—and we, in the Creole, were hard-pressed to give five minutes to the Castanet. She had been ahead of us at the Mouse. She was a smart ex-40-rater like ourselves, but we had passed her in the grand turn to windward up the river. In passing through a fleet of Thames barges the Creole's main-boom end caught the topmast stay of one of them and pulled her topmast clean out of her. In the Creole we scarcely felt the touch. I had often heard tell of 'bargee's language', but could not have believed it possible that it could have such a flow. As we left the barge away to leeward that bargee continued to trace the pedigree of all on board the Creole, particularly in the female line, and, indeed, that of the vessel herself for many generations in a manner passing all description, until we were beyond hearing.

I suppose the river—the King's highway to London Town—above the Chapman Light is too crowded for yacht-racing now, or possibly we are too timid in the handling of our yachts compared with the men who sailed them then, but Thames Estuary racing is great racing, and in later years it fell to my lot to sail many splendid matches 'below Southend' in the old Britannia.

CHAPTER II

THE COMING OF THE AMERICAN YACHT NAVAHOE

THE Britannia turned out to be the champion of her class in the first season of her career. Seven yachts competed in the class in 1893, and the number of first prizes they won was as follows: Britannia 20, Valkyrie 11, Satanita 7, Calluna, Navahoe, and Iverna each 2, and Meteor, formerly the cutter Thistle, 1. The figures do not altogether represent the relative merits of the two Watson cutters, Britannia and Valkyrie, because the latter was very nearly as good as the Prince of Wales's yacht. Lord Dunraven's Valkyrie only competed 24 times against Britannia's 38. It was in the first two years of Britannia's career, however, that events occurred which stirred the depths of British yachting to an extent which has never been equalled in our waters either before or since.

These events were the visits of the two Herreshoff cutters Navahoe and Vigilant.

American yachting people take an enormous interest in special races for 'cups'. All foreign nations attach far greater importance to winning 'championship cups' than we do.

In our International Classes at the present time thare are 'champion cups' and special 'cups'. The 'Six-Metre Scandinavian Gold Cup', the French 'One-Ton Cup', the 'Seawanhaka Cup', the 'Cumberland Cup', and the 'British-American Cup'. They produce good sport. The latter has been particularly successful, and from 1921 onwards did much to revive the interest in smaller class yacht-racing. I am, however, only stating a fact when I say that the majority of British 'yachtsmen' in the highest sense of the term do not attach much importance to the 'cups'. They do not take any particular trouble

to win them, and have to be worried or 'requested' by some club or 'gingered up' to enter for them.

This may be a good thing for our yachting, or it may not, but it is true.

When the 'Olympic Yacht Races' were held at Amsterdam in 1928, every foreign country, including America, sent their best yachts and 'teams' of amateurs as crew to sail in these 'championships'. On behalf of Great Britain, one good sportsman came forward and did his best with quite a second-rate boat in one of the matches, whilst in another event not a single British yachtsman could be found to compete or take the slightest interest in the affair. This has always been the way of English yachting people. It was the same thirty-six years ago as it is to-day. 'They do not give a damn for cups'. That is to say, for these special championship cups. The greatest of all is the 'America's Cup'.

This is regarded in America as—well, I really do not know what! The New York Yacht Club look upon themselves as custodians of the America's Cup; it is regarded as something apart and beyond all other sporting events by American yachtsmen. But English yachtsmen do not look upon it in that light—that is to say, not the practical yachtsmen who know all about yachting. They regard it nowadays as 'Lipton's affair'.

Our true yachtsmen look upon the America's Cup as an affair which has something wrong with it because the conditions of it are not the same for both sides.

The New York Yacht Club themselves made the conditions of the America's Cup.

The challenger for the America's Cup is bound to issue his challenge *ten months* before the race, and when the day of the race arrives he must sail with that yacht.

Now the defenders of the Cup may build any number of yachts for the defence of the America's Cup, and the American Deed of Gift permits the defenders to choose their best yacht *just before the race* to defend the Cup.

These unequal conditions place any challenger, nominated ten months beforehand, at an immense disadvantage. It is, in fact, not

a fair race. The disadvantage I have here pointed out is altogether apart from the challenging yacht having to cross the Atlantic Ocean, which I regard as a perfectly just condition.

When Lord Dunraven challenged for the America's Cup he built in 1893 the Valkyrie II.

The Americans built in 1893 five first-class cutters:

	Feet
Navahoe	86·9
Vigilant	87·25
Colonia	85
Jubilee	84
Pilgrim	85

The British built four first-class cutters in the same year:

	Feet
Britannia	88·0
Valkyrie II	86·8
Satanita	97·7
Calluna	83·7

With no less than nine big cutters practically of equal rating built in a single season it is easy to recognize that 1893—Britannia's year—was the greatest in yachting history.

In the autumn of 1893 Lord Dunraven took his Valkyrie II to America to race for the America's Cup.

The Americans having tested their vessels, chose the best—the Vigilant—to defend the America's Cup, and she defeated the Valkyrie at Sandy Hook.

In the same summer the Americans brought the Navahoe to England, and it was announced that this splendid vessel was to race against our yachts in Cowes Week. Here, then, we had an event which really took the sporting fancy of British yachtsmen.

There were 'special cups' to be competed for in 1893 at Cowes and Ryde, the 'Royal Victoria Gold Cup', the 'Brenton Reef Cup', and the 'Cape May Cup'. The latter pair had been won by Sir Richard Sutton's straight stemmed Genesta in America in 1885.

It was not, however, the challenge by the Navahoe in 1893 for these 'cups' that attracted English yachtsmen, or aroused their

enthusiasm. The interest was caused by the fact that an American cutter was about to join in our 'Cowes Week', and 'Ryde, Solent, and West of England' regattas, and sail in these ordinary 'Round the Coast' matches along with Britannia, Satanita, and Calluna, our own first-class yachts. Mr. Phelps R. Carroll, the American owner of Navahoe, was a very popular sportsman at Cowes.

By the end of July, when the Navahoe arrived at Cowes, the Britannia had sailed in all the regattas from the Thames to the Clyde, and had established her reputation as a great vessel. The Royal London Yacht Club had the honour of introducing the Navahoe to the British yacht-racing world on July 31, 1893. The race was one of the finest contests ever sailed in the Solent. The competitors were:

		Finishing Time		
		H.	M.	S.
Britannia (winner)	The Prince of Wales	3	46	16
Valkyrie II ..	The Earl of Dunraven	3	47	19
Navahoe	Mr. Phelps Carroll	3	47	39
Satanita	Mr. A. D. Clarke	3	50	6
Calluna	Mr. P. Donaldson	3	53	52
Iverna	Mr. J. Jameson		—	

Although thirty-six years have passed since this yacht-race took place, and I have taken personal part in most of the greatest British races in the last thirty years, I do not think any contest was quite equal in its glory to this first meeting of the Navahoe and the Britannia. I was but one of the many thousands of onlookers. The race started from Cowes at ten o'clock and lasted for 5 hours and 46 minutes. The feeling of suspense was awful. The course was incidentally somewhat different from that which we sail nowadays, because the yachts went round two lightships, the Warner and Calshot, thence to East Lepe and back to Cowes, twice round, 50 miles. After half the course was sailed the American yacht was 8 seconds ahead of the Valkyrie and 62 seconds ahead of Britannia, and as I followed them from Cowes to Ryde Pier the Navahoe was gaining! Imagine the feelings of young yachting men like myself. I was twenty-three years of age then. We had waited all our lives to see a race between an American 'sloop' and our English cutters,

and now we were in the midst of it. And Heavens! were we to be beaten over our own course at Cowes? A splendid NNW. breeze. Why had we not more sail? Damn it! Britannia had 10,327, Valkyrie 10,207, and Navahoe 11,085 square feet! They were all the same length within six inches or so. How noble the Navahoe, with her dark cotton spinnaker, looked as she ran steadily past Ryde at the head of this string of huge cutters! Every British yacht was following in her wake. I lost heart, and felt the race was over. Dixon Kemp, however, thought otherwise. He declared emphatically, 'My boy, this breeze has only to freshen a little and the Watson cutters will beat the Yankee as they work back from the Warner'. And so it turned out. Over the Ryde Middle Bank the Britannia was leading boat, and she was 2 minutes 40 seconds ahead of the Navahoe at the Calshot Lightship. There was a turn to windward for you! and Willie Jameson and John Carter had worked the Britannia on to the top of the lot. The suspense was not over, the Navahoe halved this time before the finish—but Britannia had beaten her to windward, and somehow or other we never had any fear of an American sloop in British waters after that.

The Britannia beat the Navahoe three times in succession for the Royal Victoria Gold Cup. Altogether she met the Navahoe 13 times, the Britannia beat the Navahoe 12 times, and finished ahead of her on every occasion. There was mighty good racing all through Cowes Week in those golden days. I was steering the Nicholson 2½-rater Gareth one day and won by over 5 minutes in very heavy wind and sea, and during my race I remember seeing the great Satanita reaching at her best, when she beat the Valkyrie by over 8 minutes. It was a marvellous sight as she came past me, the water was thundering half-way up her lee decks, but by Gad! she was going! Her long, clean length was immersed from her nose to the tip of her tail. The Yankee Navahoe shoved her lee bow down into it, and they couldn't handle her, and she had to give up the match before she was abreast of Egypt.

The Navahoe was an exceedingly good boat, reaching in a moderate breeze. The two races for the cups which Genesta had won in America in 1885 were sailed in September 1893. Navahoe was the

challenger and Britannia the defender. Both these races were sailed from the Needles, round Cherbourg Breakwater and back, a course of 120 miles. Curiously enough, the Navahoe won the Brenton Reef Cup. It was a very grand race, sailed in a strong easterly wind; this gave the yachts a reach both ways across the Channel, and only a short close haul of two miles from the west end of Cherbourg Breakwater to the east end of it. There was a very heavy sea in the Channel. This match was sailed under 'American Rules', that is to say, the time which the leading yacht crossed the starting ahead of the other was deducted at the finish. The 'elapsed time' being counted. The Britannia was 54½ seconds ahead at the start, and the Royal Yacht Squadron recorded the finishing time to be:

	H.	M.	S.
Britannia	10	37	35
Navahoe	10	38	32

It thus appeared that Britannia had won by 2½ seconds! Mr. Carroll, however, objected that the position of the finishing line had been changed by the mark vessel having shifted its position. The R.Y.S. consequently awarded the Brenton Reef Cup to the Navahoe. Dixon Kemp expressed the British opinion upon the result of this 'cup' race when he wrote after the event:

'Everyone was delighted when it was announced that Navahoe had been awarded the Brenton Reef Challenge Cup, and had thus achieved part of her quest in this country. Her owner had sailed his vessel in a stout-hearted way, and his bringing Navahoe here had given great fillip to yacht-building and yacht-racing; under these circumstances, it was only natural that Englishmen should feel some sympathy with him over the persistent bad luck which attended him in the races, and rejoice to see him carrying off one of the three trophies he challenged for. But apart from the sentimental satisfaction with which we regard the fact that Navahoe will restore the Brenton Reef Cup to the New York Yacht Club, there is a great deal to be dissatisfied with. The Royal Yacht Squadron should never have got into such a mess about the mark-boat.'

In the case of the finish of the Brenton Reef Cup the Sailing

THE AFTER DECK OF BRITANNIA

Committee of the R.Y.S. shifted the position of the mark-boat at the end of the race without saying a word about it to either of the competitors! It was, of course, pitch dark, except for starlight, being 10.37 p.m. According to Captain Carter, who was steering Britannia, she was about 300 to 350 yards ahead of Navahoe when they entered the Needles. If the yachts were 300 yards apart and travelling, as they were, about 10 knots, the difference in time would be 53 seconds; if they were 350 yards it would be 62 seconds. The actual difference in crossing the line was 57 seconds. Mr. Carroll contended the Navahoe was on the lee quarter of Britannia, and the shifting of the mark-boat caused him to have to sail a greater distance owing to the angle of the finishing line.

The Royal Yacht Squadron acted in a sporting manner in handing the Brenton Reef Cup to Navahoe, but I do not think they acted according to the Rules of Racing. If they did not abide by their official times, which showed Britannia to be the winner, they should have ordered the race to be re-sailed.

It was a remarkable match for 120 miles, the yachts were seldom more than 300 yards apart. The Navahoe was timed 25 seconds ahead of Britannia as they passed in under the west end of Cherbourg Breakwater. So well did the Britannia go to windward, however, that in the two miles weathering the eastern end, the Prince of Wales's cutter was timed 2 minutes 30 seconds ahead of Navahoe as they made the open sea for the homeward passage. The Navahoe reached slightly faster than Britannia both ways. The yachts left the Needles at noon with single-reefed mainsails, jib headers, and third jibs. When two miles off the French coasts *both cutters housed their topmasts.* They made the Breakwater, 60 miles, at 5 p.m., with an average speed of 12 knots. Now in all the years I have been yacht-racing (since 1884) I have never been on board a yacht which housed her topmast during a race as Navahoe and Britannia did that day. I have sailed races with housed topmast, and I have helped to get a housed topmast on end during a race, but I have never housed one.

A few days later Britannia and Navahoe again sailed the same course round Cherbourg Breakwater and back for the Cape May Cup. They had a light weather match, and the Britannia made no

mistake about her victory this time, for she beat the Navahoe by 36 minutes.

The Britannia won 20 first prizes in the races round the coast in her first season. In addition to these she scored 4 firsts out of 5 against the Navahoe, i.e. 3 in succession for the Royal Victoria Gold Cup, 1 for the Cape May Cup to Cherbourg and back, whilst the Brenton Reef Cup was awarded to the Navahoe.

CHAPTER III

THE AMERICAN YACHT VIGILANT VISITS BRITAIN

WHILST the Britannia was sailing these races in September 1893 against the Navahoe in the English Channel, Lord Dunraven had taken the Valkyrie II to America to sail for the America's Cup. The Valkyrie when in America carried 10,780 square feet of sail; the Vigilant carried 12,330 square feet. The yachts were the same length, about 87 feet L.W.L., but Vigilant was an immensely powerful boat, having 26 feet beam against Valkyrie's 21·7. As I have said, in October 1893, at Sandy Hook, the Valkyrie was beaten by the Vigilant in the races for the America's Cup. Lord Dunraven's cutter sailed well to windward in a fresh wind and sea, and in the last race led the Vigilant round the weather mark. She was overhauled on the run home, and, having 'split two spinnakers', was only beaten by 40 seconds.

The Vigilant was a substantial keel yacht, with 14 feet draught. She had a centreboard, which most land-lubbers and many yachtsmen thought gave her the 'stability' to enable her to carry the 2,288 square feet more canvas than Valkyrie. Amid the number of absurd ideas which came to the surface during the contests for the America's Cup, none is more mischievous than the delusion that a centreboard adds materially to a yacht's stability. The extent to which a metal centreboard can add to the stability of a yacht is according to its weight and the distance it is lowered. The weight of the Vigilant's keel was about 80 tons, and, I suppose, her total weight about 160. When it is considered that the centreboard would weigh only about 3 tons, its effect on her *stability* would be almost negligible. A strong puff of wind which would heel such a yacht as the Vigilant to an angle of 40 degrees would heel her to just the same angle whether

she had a centreboard or not. The *heeling* is *slower* when the board is down, and the *righting* is slower also, because the plate, or board, has to move aside a quantity of water which would not have to be moved if the centreboard were not down. A yacht with a very large centreboard compared to her under-water plane heels over so slowly that it is very deceptive. One is apt to think she possesses a stability which she does not possess, then suddenly, after a certain point, 'over she goes'. I do not attribute the success of the Vigilant to her centreboard. She was an enormously powerful yacht with great beam and ample draught of water for her type.

I have referred to these points because, in 1894, the Britannia's second year, this magnificent American cutter, the Vigilant, which was beyond question a great advance upon any yacht hitherto built in America, came to Great Britain to sail against our cutters in a season's racing round the coast of Scotland, Ireland, and England.

She had beaten Watson's Valkyrie, the sister of Britannia—or perhaps I should say cousin, for Britannia and Valkyrie were slightly different in form of hull—we knew that there was not much difference in speed between Valkyrie and Britannia.

Would the Vigilant beat the Britannia?

She was a most formidable opponent, with her great power, huge sail area, and the stability to carry it, with great beam, and a hull of bronze magnificently constructed.

These seasons of 1893 and 1894 stand alone in the memory of English yachtsmen because of the visits of Navahoe and Vigilant. No large American cutters, or, as the Americans call them, 'sloops', have visited our shores since those years. It was commonly said—and it is still said—that American yachts are faster than English yachts. This may be true. I do not know. We always get beaten in that peculiarly one-sided contest known as the America's Cup, so perhaps that is proof that English cutters are not so fast as Yankee sloops. In our British coastal waters, where the wind blows fresh and strong across the darkened seas, not always flashing blue beneath the rays of a cloudless sun, we have no experience of American cutters or sloops except in the smaller classes. So we cannot tell whether English or American yachts are the faster. In the whole history of thirty-six

years' sport the only test and trial that has taken place was afforded in 1893 and 1894 by the Navahoe and Vigilant.

In her first season, when the Britannia beat the Navahoe, not upon one single occasion did the American yacht finish a race ahead of the new cutter that George Watson had built for His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. I will now discuss what happened when the Britannia met the Vigilant.

The 'luck' of the Britannia in her second year was really extraordinary. The Prince of Wales, who was very fond of the Riviera, took her out to the Mediterranean in March; there she had only a few of the old 'swan stem' type to sail against, and she won every race, which was not unexpected. But upon returning to England and proceeding to continue the season of 1894, she began racing on the 31st of May, and by the 1st of July the Britannia had won 26 first prizes out of 28 starts. No large yacht has ever had such a record. In these races she had beaten the Vigilant, Valkyrie II, Satanita, Valkyrie I, Iverna, Carina, Creole, Namara, Vendetta, Blue Rock, Deerhound, and Marjorie.

Everything—every vessel great and small, new types and old types—had tried their luck against her upon the Y.R.A. time allowance. Only the fast-reaching Satanita had succeeded in beating her by sheer speed upon two occasions, and the Satanita was the fastest-reaching cutter in the world.

John Carter was steering her and Mr. Willie Jameson was in charge of the yacht; the combination was perfect. John Carter had been captain of Sir Richard Sutton's Genesta when she sailed for the America's Cup and won the Cape May and Brenton Reef Cups in the United States in 1885. There is little doubt he was the best skipper in the world from 1893 to 1896, when the Britannia was making yachting history.

When the Britannia first met the Vigilant, the Clyde Fortnight of 1894 had just begun. The Prince of Wales's yacht was regarded as the champion of British yachts. The Vigilant, having defeated the Valkyrie and all the American sloops, was the champion of America. Scottish folk rightly looked upon the Britannia as their own, for she was designed and built on the Clyde. Thus, when the

time came for Mr. G. J. Gould's Vigilant to hoist his racing colours in Scottish waters, the excitement was intense.

The first meeting of Britannia and Vigilant was the Mudhook Yacht Club race at Hunter's Quay, July 5th. The most tragic collision occurred at the start. There was a fresh wind, and the Satanita, on the port tack, ran stem on into the Valkyrie II, which was on the starboard tack, and sank her.

It was of course a terrible accident. This is the way it happened. The four yachts were off Hunter's Quay. The wind was blowing fresh up the Clyde, and, as they were to beat down the Clyde, the start was to be close-hauled between Colonel Malcolm's steam yacht Lutra and an outer flag-boat. Satanita, with Britannia on her weather quarter, and Vigilant again on the latter's weather quarter, were on the 'wrong' side of the line about a couple of minutes before the second gun—the starting-gun—and outside the flag-boat. They were all three reaching on the port tack, sheets close-pinned. It was their intention to reach in towards the Lutra, leaving the flag-boat to port, bear up, and cross the starting the 'wrong' way, gybe over, and thus 'luff-to' and cross the starting-line on the starboard tack. Satanita would have had the inside gybe nearest the flag-boat, Britannia the middle position, and Vigilant nearest the commodore, namely, the steam yacht Lutra.

In the meanwhile, where was the Valkyrie? She had gone over towards the Strone side of the Holy Loch, and was sailing for the line direct for the Lutra's end of it, close-hauled on the starboard tack.

The whole was a very conventional position. I have seen a similar start scores of times. Now a fearful thing occurred. Just as the Satanita was in the place she was going to gybe on the line, I think rather nearer the Lutra than to the flag-boat, a small sailing boat, apparently bound for Gourock, came round the stern of the Lutra and, sailing on, got close under the lee of the Satanita. This prevented the Satanita from gybing. She was going a tremendous pace; she was luffed a trifle to avoid running down the small sailing boat. Under her lee the boat came upright, the people were washed out of her by the Satanita's quarter wave, and her mast broken. The

Satanita, holding her port tack, kept on, crossing the stern of the Commodore, the s.y. Lutra.

The steam yachts Hebe and Vanduara were moored a little farther up the Holy Loch than the Lutra, and they were head towards Hunter's Quay, the Vanduara being astern and on the port quarter of Hebe. The Satanita put her helm hard up to try to bear away before the wind between these two steam yachts, and there was plenty of room to do so, but she was a hard-headed vessel, and, sailing at great speed, sheets pinned, there was indication she would not bear up, so again she luffed, bringing her bows towards the bridge of the Hebe. Here she met the Valkyrie, three seconds before the starting-gun. The Valkyrie had all the time been coming a straight course close-hauled on the starboard tack. Seeing the Satanita with her helm up and about to bear away under her lee, the Valkyrie luffed a little to give her all the room she could. This luff brought the Valkyrie abreast of the port side of the s.y. Hebe, the steam yacht being on Valkyrie's weather. But, as I have said, Satanita would not bear away, and, being luffed again, she hit the Valkyrie stem on. The Satanita's bows cut deep into the Valkyrie's port side between the rigging and the runner. Satanita's bowsprit broke off and her topmast bent like a whip. The force of the collision was terrific; it drove the Valkyrie right round until she gybed one way and the Satanita gybed the other. A number of Valkyrie's crew jumped overboard, and some scrambled on to the Satanita. The Valkyrie sank in 7 minutes 43 seconds. That was the end of Valkyrie II.

On this day, it being a 'Mudhook' race, all the big cutters were steered by amateurs, and this naturally gave rise to a lot of talk, people saying (after the accident) that it was unsafe to allow amateur helmsmen to steer such large vessels. I do not think there is much in that argument. It is not a question of whether the helmsman is an 'amateur' or a 'professional'. One may be as good or as bad a helmsman as the other. The fact is, however, the steersman should know the boat. It is an unwise thing to ask any man to take the helm of a 90-foot cutter or a 75-footer and invite him to handle her during the starting manœuvres of a race unless he has been

afforded an opportunity of trying what the yacht will do before any such manœuvres are attempted. In 1894 it was one of the rules of the Mudhook Yacht Club that every yacht in their regatta must be steered by an amateur. After this collision the rule was waived for the largest class.

The collision between the Satanita and Valkyrie gave rise to a famous lawsuit. The issue of the case was broadly: If the Y.R.A. Rules differ from the rules laid down by the Merchant Shipping Act, are the yachts competing in the race bound in law by the Y.R.A. Rules or by the Act of Parliament? Or, as a sailor would say, 'Are they bound by Y.R.A. or Board of Trade?'

This issue was carried to the House of Lords, and resulted in what is known by lawyers as the 'Satanita Judgment', which held the yachts in a race under Y.R.A. Rules are legally bound by the Y.R.A. Rules.

After the memorable accident on the day of Vigilant's first appearance in the Clyde, the Britannia and the Vigilant continued sailing, and, to the immense delight of Scottish yachtsmen, the Prince of Wales's cutter was the winner.

The news that the Britannia had beaten the Vigilant raised the enthusiasm on the banks of the Clyde to heights hitherto unknown in yachting. The next day, Saturday, July 7th, was appointed for the race for the Queen's Cup under the Royal Clyde Yacht Club at Hunter's Quay. There is an old custom that for a Queen's Cup or King's Cup not less than three yachts must compete. The Satanita and Valkyrie being 'out of the class', Mr. James Coats entered his old straight-stemmed cutter Marjorie to 'make the third'. She only received 16 minutes on a 50-mile course from the Vigilant. The Vigilant, on account of having 1,200 square feet more canvas than Britannia, had to allow the latter three minutes. The crowds lined the shores from Kirn to Dunoon and from Gourock to the Cloch Lighthouse. Mr. D. F. D. Neill—now Colonel Duncan Neill, who sails the Shamrock for Sir Thomas Lipton—was in charge of the club steamer, which, according to the reports, was 'dangerously crowded'. There was an immense fleet of steamers and paddle passenger boats. The Clyde was at its best, a southerly wind, light

BRITANNIA, AFTER LAUNCHING IN THE MEDINA RIVER, COWES

but true; so, starting at 10.30 a.m., they finished the 50 miles by 4.17 p.m.

This race was perfectly marvellous! Down the Clyde to a mark-boat off Skelmorlie; across to a mark near Ascog Church on the shore of Bute; up the Clyde to Kilcreggan, and home to Hunter's Quay. Twice round, never more than a hundred seconds between them, the Britannia, gloriously handled by John Carter and Mr. Willie Jameson, always just ahead. They luffed far out of their course; the Vigilant blanketed the Britannia running before the wind. At that time, in this steady light breeze, they were the fastest vessels in the world.

Nowadays we speak of nothing but tall masts; in those days they outvied one another in long main-booms. The Britannia's boom was 91 feet; that of the Vigilant 96 feet 6 inches. The Britannia's spinnaker-boom was 66 feet; that of the Vigilant 71 feet 6 inches. The Vigilant's sails were 10 feet higher than Britannia's. The Yankee could run faster than Britannia and cover her, but she could not run much faster. To windward the Britannia a little more than held her own. This light breeze freshened until they had all they could do to carry their sail. That old sailor-man Harry Horne, the yachting correspondent of those golden times, says:

'They went along the wind this time for Ascog in a rattling breeze —as much, in fact, as they could hang to with jack-yarders. Vigilant was laying down more than Britannia, but smoking along faster, both being in a perfect smother of foam. They made short miles of the distance, which was done by each with four sails, and when they gybed round the Ascog mark the timing was Britannia 3. 2. 44, Vigilant 3. 3. 29.'

If the reader is a yachtsman, he will delight in the old seaman's phrases. But think of it—45 seconds difference after going at it hammmer-and-tongs for 40 miles! Well, Vigilant cut the Britannia out at the Kilcreggan mark, the last mark of the day. She lay home to Hunter's Quay 67 seconds ahead of the Britannia. The Queen's Cup was safe for the Prince of Wales with 1 minute 53 seconds in hand, but with the Vigilant, the larger and indeed the more powerful vessel, rested the honour of being first home.

In the first seven matches they sailed the Britannia won every race. She was unquestionably far better handled. The Vigilant, however, was a far more formidable opponent than the Navahoe. The British champion met the American champion 17 times and beat her 12 to 5. The Britannia won 11 of the races, and on one occasion the Satanita beat 'em both, having a reaching chance, whilst the great rivals 'got luffing one another'. Mr. Gould took the Vigilant all round the British coast—to Scotland, Belfast, Dublin Bay, Cork Harbour, Penzance, Cowes, 'Round the Isle of Wight', which was one of his victories, to Ryde, Dartmouth, and Start Bay. He challenged the Britannia for the 'Cape May Cup', which the Prince of Wales had retained successfully in her race round Cherbourg Breakwater against the Navahoe, but at the last moment the Vigilant was unable to race, having damaged her centreboard by striking it on a rock when returning to Cowes from Start Bay.

Dixon Kemp, who was a great judge of yacht-racing when I was young, summed up the visit of the Vigilant very fairly. He said:

'The result of the seventeen encounters between Vigilant and Britannia leaves their relative merits rather indistinctly defined; but judged on the bare record, Britannia is the superior sort of craft for match sailing. She cannot, it appears, be driven as fast through the water in a strong blow of wind as the Vigilant can; on the other hand, she is a more certain and reliable performer in moderate breezes. Perhaps it would be just to say, putting the record on one side, that the two yachts are of equal merit, or that neither nation can claim superiority.'

I am often told by 'knowledgeable modern yachtsmen' that if two nearly equally good yachts meet 'on the Y.R.A. time scale', and if one is a little higher rating than another—i.e. a little bigger—and consequently has to give the smaller yacht time allowance, that the *bigger vessel will win.* They tell me that if many races are sailed the balance will be strongly in favour of the bigger vessel.

I live and learn. The Vigilant was bigger than Britannia and thus had to give her 3 minutes on a 50-mile course. The smaller vessel won by 12 events to 5. This seems to completely reverse the theory that 'it is better to give time allowance than to receive it'. But I

am getting too theoretical, and had better close this chapter. The Vigilant's visit of 1894 was the last appearance of a great American cutter in British waters. Like that of the Navahoe, it was a splendid and sporting thing. The American owners, members of the New York Yacht Club, were great and true sportsmen, and they entered into our merry, light-hearted pastime of sailing anywhere about the coast—over all sorts of courses, in tides and difficult waters for visitors—with the spirit of seamen. They won or lost with a generosity which endeared them to British yachtsmen. I hope I may live to see another American 'big cutter' go round the British coast again.

CHAPTER IV

AILSA AND VALKYRIE III

IN the Britannia's third season, 1895, Mr. William Fife designed a large cutter to race against her called Ailsa. She was owned by Mr. A. Barclay Walker. The Ailsa was about the same size in hull as the Britannia, but carried rather more sail, and had to give the Prince's boat just over a minute time allowance on a 50-mile course. I was trying my hand at yachting journalism in those days, and had begun a few years before that to write descriptions of the races and boats in the smaller classes. Dixon Kemp was Yachting Editor of the *Field* and Secretary of the Y.R.A., but he had given up sailing personally and used to look on at the racing from some coign of vantage ashore. The journalist who used to write the wonderfully graphic descriptions of the Britannia's matches against her rivals from 1893 to 1897 was a quaint old character named Harry Horne, and he very often sailed on board one of the big yachts. I used to sail chiefly in the smaller yachts, and often steered them with a certain amount of success. One day during Cowes Week I was standing on Cowes Green talking to Dixon Kemp —or listening to him talking, for he was a man who spoke little, but every word he said was gold—and he remarked that each race sailed by the 1-raters, 2½-raters, and 5-raters was just as interesting and classic as these great races contested by Britannia and her class, although little notice was taken of them in the Press. I asked him why the newspapers said so little about the small classes? 'D. K.', as everybody called him, replied that there was nobody but Harry Horne and himself that could write any sense about yacht-races, and neither of them had time to pay proper attention to the small craft; and, after a few moments, he added: 'You know all about 'em. Why don't you write about them in the *Field*?'

I said I should like to try, and when should I begin? 'D. K.' replied, 'To-day'. That is how I became a yachting journalist about thirty-five years ago. It is really futile to attempt to tell yachting people anything about the sport of yacht-racing unless you are constantly and continuously sailing in the races. You cannot know the technicalities if you merely look on from dry land; but, what is worse than that, you cannot get any savour of salt water or any life or fun into your description of the sport unless you take an active part in it—on board a racing yacht. Now, at the time of which I write—1895—old Harry Horne was the only graphic and seamanlike writer about the Britannia and her contemporaries. He sailed in most of the big yachts and frequently in the Ailsa. He was a strange character, and I think he had been land steward to Mr. Tankerville Chamberlayne, who owned the famous cutter Arrow. In winter Harry Horne wrote about coursing, and he was as good a judge of greyhounds as he was of yachts. His descriptions of yacht-races were most breezy and delightful in the *Field* and *The Times*, and he had a way of coining expressions of his own which never seemed out of place to the true lovers of yachting. One might meet Harry Horne in Cowes Street, or along the esplanade at Rothesay, or making his way towards the 'Three Cups' in old Harwich town, a famous resort of yacht skippers in those days, and any afternoon he might be three sheets in the wind, but the next morning you would be sure to read a column of thrilling yachting literature in *The Times* or *Field*. Only once was he known to fail, and that was after he had followed a yacht-race on the club steamer of the Royal Thames Yacht Club, and the Commodore, Lord Alfred Paget, had done him too well. Harry Horne that evening was found by the sub-editor of the *Field* asleep in his chair in the *Field* office with only one word written on a blank sheet of paper before him, and that word in the top left-hand corner of his foolscap was 'Yachting'. 'Now, Mr. Horne,' said the sub-editor, 'for Heaven's sake wake up, and let us have your stuff. I want fifteen hundred words of the best, and I'm going to press in an hour, so buck up!' 'You shall have it,' was the reply, and forthwith old Harry got to work. An hour later the sub-editor went in to where Horne had been sitting to get his

copy. He found Harry Horne had left the office, but was relieved to see several sheets of copy in his old correspondent's clear, bold handwriting lying upon the table. So he put on his glasses just to glance at the sheets before sending them up to the printer. What did he see? To his astonishment, the word '*Yachting—Yachting—Yachting*' written over and over again, fifteen hundred times, and nothing else whatever!

The old man's brain had failed to work, or some strange lapse had occurred in it. The annual festivity of the 'premier yacht club of the Metropolis', as the Royal Thames Yacht Club is called, had been too much for him.

But that was years before the days of Britannia and Ailsa and their great races, which Harry Horne afterwards described so well, and whilst I saw many of those races in 1895 and 1896 myself, it is with reference to Horne's writing that I now refresh my memory. The yacht Mr. Fife designed to meet the Britannia in her third season—the Ailsa—was an exceedingly beautiful vessel. Her model can be seen in the collection of the Royal Clyde Yacht Club at Hunter's Quay. In March 1895 the Prince of Wales visited the Riviera with Britannia, and it was there she met Ailsa. The Fife boat left the impression that 'she was the fastest yacht ever built'. In 6 races she beat the Britannia 4 times. When the sailing began in May on the Thames, it was soon found that far too high an estimate had been made of the Ailsa's quality. Mr. Willie Jameson, John Carter, and his crew were too good for the Ailsa. The Britannia won 38 first prizes in 50 starts, and the Ailsa 12 firsts out of 41 starts. The Britannia was extraordinarily successful in 1895. She went to every regatta on the coast. The Satanita was not fitted out, and did not race. The Calluna had retired, the Valkyrie II was sunk, so truly the class was depleted. Ailsa, proceeding round the coast, was not equal to tackling the Britannia. The Prince of Wales's cutter was not towed from port to port in those days, but hammered her way round the coast under trysail. It is computed that in this single season Captain John Carter sailed the Britannia 6,500 miles —that is to say, she raced 2,000 miles and made 4,500 miles of passages.

The tendency to increase sail area may be seen from the following figures:

Year Built	Yacht	Loadwater Line	Sail Area
		Feet	Square Feet
1893	Britannia	88	10,384
1895	Ailsa	89	10,896
1895	Valkyrie III	89	13,028
1896	Meteor	89	12,343
1897	Bona	76	7,597

Lord Dunraven had built his third Valkyrie to race for the America's Cup, and Watson designed her. The season of 1895 was therefore enlivened by this freak-like vessel meeting the Britannia on the Clyde under Y.R.A. Rules. The Britannia and Valkyrie III met three times. The Cup challenger had to allow the smaller vessel 4 minutes 2 seconds on a 50-mile course, and the Britannia won the rubber by 2 races to 1. The excitement on the Clyde ran high, because the Britannia was the 'trial horse' for Valkyrie III, Scotland's new challenger for the America's Cup. Ailsa was a somewhat unknown quantity, because after her early successes in the Riviera she had not been doing well, and she had had her spars clipped and a lot of lead taken off her keel.

Great as the interest in the meeting of Britannia and Valkyrie III was in 1895, it was nothing like that shown in the Britannia–Vigilant contests of the previous season. Rothesay Bay provided the rendezvous, and in light airs the Valkyrie III obtained a long lead; towards the end of the race, however, the wind so favoured the Britannia that she was only 300 yards astern and won the match. Harry Horne says:

'Britannia's extraordinary win came about through the medium of a big flying jib cut similar to one which Carter had in the Thalia 40-rater, and which won the latter several prizes. There is no good blinking at the fact that the result took the gilt off the wonderful work Valkyrie III had done previously, and we were certainly

astonished that her lofty sails did not keep her going faster in the chills when the boats got pretty close together.'

The Mudhook match at Hunter's Quay three days later was a genuine trial of hard reaching. They started at 10.30, sailed 50 miles, and, after a tremendous race, 'the Red and Blue with the White Prince of Wales's feathers' came across the winning line at 2. 56. 42. The Ailsa was tearing in the wake of the Britannia, 1 minute 9 seconds astern, and the Valkyrie III, unable to carry her stuff, was over 3 minutes behind Britannia. I felt the Valkyrie would never win the America's Cup after that!

Old Harry Horne puts it into his own language:

'They were sailing clean full and bye in crossing to Toward, and, as usual with a north-wester, it came strong out of Rothesay Bay from the Kyles of Bute, and jibtopsails were not risked. Britannia came ploughing along, but Ailsa was close on her trail. Valkyrie, however, began to drop back, and she was falling down on her side in quite a helpless sort of way. After passing Toward, the Cloch could be pointed with sheets just started, and from the Perch up past Inellan the wind ripped off the shore in spiteful puffs, and all were in a perfect smother of foam. Britannia was humming along in a faultless sort of way, but Ailsa was boring as if she was trying to go down head first, and she gave an unblushing display of side, while in regard to Valkyrie words could hardly describe the figure she was cutting. The main-boom was pretty close to the water, as the vessel was simply going along on her uppers; in fact, she was heeling so much the wind must have been shooting over her sails, and such a sea as she was raising up at the lee quarter no yacht ever made before. There was none, of course, from her weather quarter, as that was cocked high in the air, but the wave which went from the lee quarter with a roar was plainly defined for fully half a mile. Valkyrie's display from Inellan Perch up as far as the Bullwood was truly a fearful and wonderful sight.'

It is curious to look back upon the rig of the great cutter Valkyrie III and contemplate the sorry display she made in a strong wind on the Clyde. They spoke of the gigantic height of the Valkyrie III's sails in those days. She was 132 feet from deck to

SIR PHILIP HUNLOKE AT THE WHEEL OF BRITANNIA

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topsail-yard sheave. The Meteor was about the same. The Britannia's height has now been raised until to-day (1929) it is a few feet more than that of Valkyrie III and Meteor. It was the unwieldy main-boom of the latter vessels that was the trouble in 1895 and 1896. The main-boom of Valkyrie III was 105 feet, and that of Britannia in 1929 is 83 feet 6 inches. The Valkyrie III measured 186 feet from boom end to bowsprit end. The Britannia to-day is 145 feet. The modern narrow, tall sail-plan is, of course, far more efficient for racing round the coast. Harry Horne's description of the Valkyrie III in a fresh wind on the Clyde in 1895 leaves no doubt in the mind of yachting people that the pressure of enormous canvas upon a vessel does not increase her speed after a certain point.

In her third season the Britannia was still the champion British cutter.

CHAPTER V

THE CUTTERS METEOR II AND BONA

THE German Emperor was a keen patron of yachting, and he really possessed a good deal of knowledge of the subject, although not so much as his sailor brother Prince Henry of Prussia. The Kaiser called his racing yachts Meteor, and altogether he owned five of them. Meteor I was the old Watson boat Thistle, which was an America's Cup challenger; Meteor II was a great cutter with more sail than Britannia, built from Watson's design in 1896; Meteor III was a 400-ton schooner built by Cary Smith in America; Meteor IV was his first German-built schooner, a sister to Herr Krupp von Bohlen's Germania; whilst his Meteor V was an improvement upon Number IV, again built at Krupps' works at Kiel in the year before the war. The Kaiser told me all about his yachts, and how he came to take to the sport so keenly. It was not merely because he was personally fond of racing; he said that he wished to encourage yachting in Germany and maritime sport to induce the German people to be interested in marine affairs, and so gradually to work up their enthusiasm for his Navy. He was perfectly frank about it, and at Kiel regatta in 1912, when I sailed two races in Meteor IV and won them both, he told me it had taken him nearly twenty-five years—since the time of Meteor I—to train an all-German crew to be as good as a British crew. Meteor I and Meteor II had English crews. Meteor III about 60 per cent. German, and Meteors IV and V all German. I never sailed aboard the last of the Meteors, but I raced frequently *against* Meteors II, III, and IV, and very often on board Meteor IV against other vessels, and I can say that the last all-German crew she had in the year 1913 were exceedingly good men.

THE EX-GERMAN EMPEROR'S CUTTER METEOR RACING AGAINST THE BRITANNIA IN 1896

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The all-German crew of the Meteor IV were not quite so good as the splendid American-Scandinavian crews of the schooners Ingomar, 1904, and Westward, 1910, trained and commanded by the late Captain Charlie Barr; the American-Scandinavians were perhaps the best crew I was ever shipmates with, and only patriotic instinct prevents me from saying that these men and the all-German crew of the Kaiser's Meteor IV were equal to a crew of English sailors. It was in the year 1896 that the German Emperor built his enormous Watson cutter Meteor II, with the object of beating the Britannia. Of course this Meteor was wholly British in design, construction, and crew, and a clever old Gosport man, Bobby Gomes, was her skipper.

The Meteor II of 1896 was the first vessel to really defeat the Britannia, and it was not at that time a matter of surprise that such a great designer as George Watson should have been able to beat the boat he had designed four years before. The Fife cutter Ailsa had always been a splendid match for Britannia. The pair being nearly of equal size would often sail in close company for miles. So long as yacht-racing takes place between yachts of *approximately* equal size such as Britannia, Ailsa, Satanita, Valkyrie II, Vigilant, and Navahoe, the sport is of the highest order. When, however, the yachts in the race are greatly different in size the sport is sure to deteriorate. A long time allowance is then required to bring the vessels to equality, and when this is necessary the keen edge is taken off the sport. On the other hand, when sportsmen desire to maintain very high-class racing amongst the largest and most costly vessels, history has proved that one must not attempt to insist upon the yachts being *exactly* equal in size, thereby abolishing all time allowance. This *purely level* 'class racing' is the ideal sport for 5, 10, 20, or 40-tonners or raters, or 6, 8, 12, or 15 metres. It cannot, however, succeed with yachts of the largest class. For yachts of the largest class like Britannia, Ailsa, etc., their rating should be *approximately* equal, not *actually* equal, and there should be a small margin of time allowance. This slight or small margin of allowance leaves room for the owner to improve or alter his yacht and maintain her life when she appears to be beaten.

The Ailsa, for instance, was altered repeatedly, sometimes being given a slightly larger and sometimes a slightly smaller rating, and her changes enabled her to be improved so that she could frequently beat the Britannia. Thus whilst in the season of 1895 Britannia won 38 first prizes to Ailsa's 12, during the two seasons of 1896 and 1897 Ailsa won 29 first prizes to Britannia's 24. The latitude allowing the Ailsa to alter her trim proved most useful to her. To promote good racing amongst the biggest yachts it should be remembered that it is most important to insist upon the vessels being nearly the same size, but not absolutely so.

In the seasons of 1896–7 the Y.R.A. made two serious errors, firstly by permitting yachts of vastly different size to sail in the well-established class of Britannia and her contemporaries; secondly by altering and meddling with the Scale of Time Allowance. These errors were the beginning of the series of circumstances which eventually destroyed the British racing of the big cutters for many years.

In the year 1896 the 40-rater or 65-footer Caress, a boat designed by Watson, had her rating increased to 67 feet, and in this way she was allowed to start and race with the Britannia's class. This was within the rules, but was most disastrous to sport. The class was open to all yachts *over* 65-feet rating, consequently the little Caress, by using a larger topsail, could increase her rating from 65 to 66 or 67, and legally demand admission to the class.

In 1896, according to the rules then in force, Britannia's rating was 96·8, Satanita's 99·8, Ailsa's 100·1, the new cutter Meteor built for the German Emperor 101·9. With these yachts the Caress joined, being rated at 67. The Meteor upon a 48-mile course had to allow the Britannia 5 minutes 18 seconds and the Caress 38 minutes 19 seconds. The Britannia was now in a position of some difficulty owing to having to sail against a new vessel of greater size and also a very much smaller boat, but whilst Meteor was the best there was no great indication of any of the older cutters being outclassed by the new vessel. They could all win on their day.

In spite of the wretched little Caress cutting-in 28 times, the year 1896 was a remarkable season. From the spring regattas of

the Mediterranean onwards round the British coast 60 races were sailed by the big cutters: Ailsa won 21 first prizes; Britannia 14; Meteor 13; and Satanita and Caress each won 6 firsts.

The new Watson cutter carried 2,000 square feet more canvas than Britannia. The Ailsa had her sail area increased by 1,400 square feet. These yachts could win prizes from the Britannia in light winds, but the Prince of Wales's cutter and the Satanita were still the best in a breeze.

The speed of the Satanita, designed by Mr. J. M. Soper in 1893, is often the topic of conversation amongst yachtsmen. Truly her maximum speed was enormous. The fastest race she ever sailed was in this season, 1896, from the Lower Hope round the Mouse Lightship and back to Gravesend, 50 miles. She started at 11.45 with a clear wind to leeward of the whole fleet, and reached to the Mouse and back with a whole mainsail and jib-header. I well remember the match. The Satanita heeled to a far greater angle than any other vessel, but she was travelling like wildfire and not wallowing. Her time was 3 hours 38 minutes 22 seconds; speed 13·7 knots for the 50 miles. The Britannia, with Ailsa close in her track, was two miles astern of the Satanita. Young people tell me nowadays that if a yacht-race is sailed at very high speed the limit yachts (i.e. the small yachts with the most time allowance) are bound to win it. On this day the Satanita had the 65-footer Isolde and the 66-footer Caress against her, and she beat these 'Forties' by 51 and 56 minutes respectively; that is over a minute per mile. No cutter in my knowledge has ever equalled the speed of the Satanita. To drive a vessel in modern times as the old Satanita was driven in the New Thames match on May 21, 1896, you would crash the mast out of her. In 1901 I sailed in the Watson yawl Sybarita in the 75-mile match from Rothesay round Ailsa Craig, and our speed averaged 12·4 knots. That was the fastest I ever averaged for a long race. The sea, however, off Ailsa Craig was very heavy, and of course Satanita had smooth water. Nevertheless, it is wonderful to contemplate that the Satanita could average 1·3 knots higher speed than the Sybarita.

I do not think the speed of the Satanita has ever been approached

by a cutter in this country. To-day if we can average 11·75 or 12 knots in a big cutter it would be considered astonishing, but of course the old Satan was 97 feet on the waterline.

In the season of 1896 a serious collision took place off Southsea between the German Emperor's new cutter Meteor and a German 20-rater designed by Herreshoff named Isolde (not the 40-rater Isolde mentioned above which belonged to Peter Donaldson), owned by Baron Zedwitz. I was racing over the same course that day with the late Colonel Bagot in Creole, so I only saw the collision from a distance. The Ailsa was leading the big cutters, and the Britannia was just ahead of the Meteor at the end of the first round by the Spit Fort. The big ships were overtaking the 'Twenties', or as we called them in 1896 the '52-footers', and the Meteor's main-boom passed over the stern of the Isolde, swept the mast out of her, and completely wrecked her, killing Baron Zedwitz the owner.

This accident gave rise to a lot of discussion about the danger of sailing large cutters with long main-booms. Some said such cutters as the Meteor were too big to be safe, and I remember a good deal of nonsense was talked about the whole affair. The collision might have been avoided without any difficulty whatever had the Y.R.A. sailing rules been observed. However, I think the effect of this collision was partially responsible for the Y.R.A. making certain alterations in the Scale of Time Allowance in the following year which were propounded to 'discourage very large cutters from being built'.

Of course the proper way to discourage large cutters from being built was to fix a limit to the size of the yachts which would be permitted to sail in the class. This, however, was not done. What had actually occurred was this: At the end of the season of 1895, which had been productive of such wonderful sport between Britannia and Ailsa, the Y.R.A. foresaw that it might be possible to outbuild those vessels by building a yacht with less body, greater draught, and deeper keel and greater sail-carrying power. Consequently it would be possible to give that new vessel more sail area. They anticipated the designed boat of the future would be more of a 'skimming dish' than Britannia, and would probably beat her.

The Y.R.A. made changes in the rule of rating measurement to counteract the danger they had foreseen, but the steps they took were feeble and injurious to the existing yachts. Taking advantage of the opportunity, George Watson designed the Meteor for the German Emperor only one foot longer on the waterline than Britannia, but with 2,000 square feet more sail.

The Meteor had to allow the Britannia 6½ seconds per mile in 1896, which she could generally do in light to moderate weather, but not always in a fresh to strong wind.

In the year 1897 the Y.R.A. altered their Scale of Time Allowance, and increased the amount of time a large yacht had to give a small one, so that the German Emperor's Meteor had to give the Prince of Wales's cutter Britannia 13 seconds per mile instead of 6½ seconds. So far, then, as Meteor and Britannia were concerned for 1897, the latter was placed in an excellent position.

The position of the Ailsa, however, which was nearly equal in rating to the Meteor, was very badly affected by the changes in the time allowance. In 1895 and 1896 the Ailsa belonging to Mr. A. Barclay Walker had shown splendid sport racing against Britannia, and the lack of consideration shown to the owners of these yachts by the Y.R.A. seems to have been extraordinary.

The late Mr. Augustus Manning, speaking at a meeting of the Y.R.A. at which he presided, went so far as to say that boats the size of the Ailsa were 'monstrosities and undesirable'. Mr. Barclay Walker, the owner of Ailsa, replied in the Press in December 1896 with great truth that the British public appreciated the big class. He said that in the season of 1895 he had to allow Britannia 1 minute 7 seconds on a 50-mile course, but in the season of 1896, owing to the change in the rules, he had to allow her 3 minutes 23 seconds. Again owing to the addition to the time allowance scale in 1897, the Ailsa would have to give Britannia over 5 minutes. Mr. Walker pointed out that these changes made him hesitate as to whether he would race the Ailsa in British waters in 1897. He explained that Britannia and Satanita would suffer equally should a new yacht be built to conform to the rules in 1897, and suggested that the enormous expense which was entailed in keeping up these

'monstrosities' should receive a little more consideration from the Y.R.A.

Admiral the Hon. Victor Montagu supported Mr. Walker, and gave his opinion that the Y.R.A. were ruining what they had by taxing the existing boats, in the vain hope of improving type.

Mr. Augustus Manning replied that Mr. Walker's boat the Ailsa, along with Britannia and Satanita, would in the future be in a better position as regards not being outbuilt by yachts of larger rating like the Meteor, whilst it was not yet proved that the new rule and allowances would enable designers to beat the Ailsa and Britannia with a smaller and less costly yacht.

What Mr. Manning and his colleagues on the Y.R.A. at that time did not realize was that all future sport in the class would be destroyed by being composed of yachts of greatly different size.

The crushing addition to the time allowance was put on *above* 90 rating, and that no doubt would have the effect of preventing Meteors being built because Meteor's rating was 101·9 and Britannia's 96·8. But there was obviously a chance for a designer to attempt to turn out a much smaller new cutter and take many prizes in the class.

George Watson saw this and built the Bona in 1897 for the Duke d'Abruzzi. Her rating was only 83·2-feet rating, and she received about 22 seconds per mile from the Britannia and 34 seconds per mile from the Meteor.

Yachtsmen to-day have been educated to think about the 'sizes' of yachts in 'metres' rating, and I may explain that had these three yachts been classed to-day their sizes would have been approximately:

Yacht	Rating Metres by I.Y.R.U. Rule	Time Allowance by I.Y.R.U. Scale, 1929
Meteor	27·4	0
Britannia	25·8	8
Bona	21·7	30·3

THE CUTTER BONA

DESIGNED BY G. L. WATSON IN 1897

A small first-class yacht specially designed to beat the larger vessels on time allowance

Yachting people to-day, seeing the King's yacht Britannia sailing so successfully in modern times, wonder why she retired from racing thirty years ago. They ask: 'Was the Britannia beaten?'

The reader by following these details will be able to understand why the Britannia became 'outclassed' and was forced to retire from racing in 1897.

In the seasons of 1893 to 1895, when the big cutter class became firmly established, it included a number of yachts which were practically the same size, and consequently the time allowance between them was negligible. It was just enough to allow any boat to change her rating and improve herself and keep going in the class, but it was not enough to spoil the sport. Britannia, Valkyrie II, Calluna, Satanita, Navahoe, Vigilant, and Ailsa were approximately the same rating.

The beginning of the end was when Meteor in 1896 came in with increased size, and when the little pot-hunter Caress jumped out of the 40-rating class by increasing her sail area and began to win prizes from the *bona fide* first-class yachts by means of long time allowance.

In 1897, as the result of these changes, the great class, founded by Britannia and her contemporaries in 1893, deteriorated and broke up. It was foolish to expect the Britannia and Ailsa to race against a small vessel like the Bona and give her 30 seconds per mile time allowance.

The Satanita was not fitted out.

The Ailsa raced against the Britannia in the Mediterranean, where the time allowance was not altered, but Mr. Barclay Walker announced that he would sail her no more in British waters. The result of the Y.R.A.'s legislation was a positive disaster. The Y.R.A. destroyed first-class yacht-racing.

The season of 1897 began with Meteor racing against the little Caress at Harwich, and of course the amount of the time allowance destroyed all idea of sport.

The Britannia only raced four times in British waters during Cowes Week.

Two new yachts, the Bona, for the Duke d'Abruzzi, sailed by Captain Sycamore, and Aurora, a vessel designed by Soper for Mr. C. D. Rose, raced against the Meteor. Fife designed a sort of semi-racer, the Hester, for Mr. John Nairn. All these vessels were of odd sizes, and looked to picking up prizes by the aid of considerable time allowance.

The final result was that in 1897 Bona, the new Watson boat, won 16 races, Meteor 13, Britannia won 10 races, Caress 7, Hester 4, and Aurora 3. The Prince of Wales's yacht, as I have said, only raced four times at Cowes, and won 2 first prizes. She competed with her old rival Ailsa on the Riviera, and each won 8 first prizes.

It seems extraordinary that the Yacht Racing Association having established such a splendid class and type of yacht as they did from 1893 to 1896 with Britannia and her contemporaries, were utterly unable to take steps to preserve the good sport they had established.

If they had limited the size of the class 'top and bottom' so that the amount of the time allowance had been negligible between the largest and the smallest vessel, there is every reason to suppose that the class would have been maintained, the existing yachts would have continued for a considerable period of years, and new vessels would have been built.

I am well aware that with the enterprise of designers freak-like yachts would have been attempted, but as they appeared, even thirty years ago, legislation could and would have to be devised to prevent freaks.

After the break-up of the first-class cutter-racing in 1897, it was not until the present day the sport was successfully re-established upon a sound basis.

Twenty years later in 1907–8 the Shamrock, White Heather, and Brynhild began the first-class cutter-racing again. But in 1907 the Y.R.A.'s legislation went to the opposite extreme.

In the 23-metre class of 1907–8 the rule was made that there should be no time allowance whatever. The Brynhild was sunk, and no other 23-metre yacht was ever built to race upon level terms against Shamrock and White Heather.

The chance of failure—without the saving latitude of a little time

allowance to permit a modicum of change in rating—was too great. Yachtsmen would not build. The 23-metre class as a class without time allowance consisted of two boats, Shamrock and White Heather, and it expired before the War.

First-class cutter-racing in British waters is the most glorious, spectacular, and exhilarating of all sports.

It existed in bygone days from 1875 to 1885 between such cutters as Kriemhilda, Vol-au-vent, Arrow, Cuckoo, Cythera, Formosa, Erycina, Vanduara, Marjorie, Genesta, Galatea, Samoena, and Irex.

It came again in my young days between Britannia, Calluna, Valkyrie II, Satanita, Navahoe, Vigilant, Ailsa, and Meteor from 1893 to 1896.

It failed at the end of 1897.

The great sport has been re-established again by the King's example with old Britannia.

In the present year we have first-class cutters in Candida, Astra, Cambria, Shamrock, and White Heather. Young and old, the nucleus of a splendid class equal to the classes of the Victorian Era. I hope those who legislate for the sport of yacht-racing will be careful to preserve this new class.

Our new class of 1929 is based upon ideal principles. Our rules provide that the yachts must be of good wholesome type. As in the halcyon days of Formosa and Vanduara, or Britannia and Ailsa, our yachts are much the same size—tonnage or rating—call it what you will—but they are not necessarily exactly the same. To be too exact, or too exacting, kills sport.

On the other hand, to 'over legislate' and crush the older yachts, or to admit yachts of much smaller or much larger tonnage, will kill sport even as Britannia and Ailsa were destroyed in 1897. We have the examples of the unwise legislation of the past before us. There can be far too much 'messing about with time scales and rules.' We should reap the benefit of the mistakes made by our predecessors. The Britannia's first racing career ended in 1897. Her flag was hauled down.

CHAPTER VI

BRITANNIA IS SOLD AND BOUGHT AGAIN

I DARE say a good many young yachtsmen do not know that the Britannia was ever sold. They know that she was built by King Edward when Prince of Wales in 1893, and that within their memory she has always been 'the King's yacht'. It may even come as a surprise to many to learn that at one time she passed out of the hands of the Royal Family.

When the first-class racing in British waters broke up in 1897 for the technical reasons I have explained in the previous chapter, the Prince of Wales sold his racing cutter Britannia. She was not a beaten or outclassed yacht in the sense that her form or type had been improved upon.

As I have said, the Meteor could beat her in light winds, but the issue between the two vessels was never very certainly decided.

The Britannia only met the Bona twice in 1897, and therefore the issue between the Britannia and the Bona was never decided at all.

When the Britannia met the Meteor in Cowes Week for the last time under Y.R.A. Rules the bigger vessel had to allow the Britannia 10 minutes 58 seconds on a 50-mile course. The pair met twice, and on each occasion the Britannia beat the Meteor.

As I have said, in that year the foolish error was made of mixing up Bona, and even the 'Forties' Isolde and Caress (which received 37 minutes from Britannia) with the big class.

There was therefore no indication whatever that the Britannia was a beaten boat. The sport in the class had expired owing to the circumstances described.

I am indebted to my friend Mr. J. R. Barnett, the present head of the firm of G. L. Watson and Company, of Glasgow, for the correct

details of the sale of the Britannia. People used to say that Mr. E. T. Hooley, who was well known late in the Victorian Era, walked into a yacht agent's office in London and said, 'I want a yacht.' The agent replied, 'Well! I have got one for sale belonging to the Prince of Wales.' 'Very well, that will do,' said Mr. Hooley. 'I will buy her.' The story goes that when the purchaser saw the Britannia and found she had not got a funnel, he was disgusted with her and refused to take her. I do not believe this tale, but curiously enough in *Lloyd's Yacht Register* for 1898–9 Mr. E. T. Hooley is put down as the owner of Britannia. Mr. Barnett tells me he was not really the registered owner.

The following is the correct history of the ownership of the Britannia.

1. She was built by Messrs. D. and W. Henderson, of Glasgow, and designed by George L. Watson for Albert Edward Prince of Wales, and registered May 19, 1893.
2. She was sold to John Lawson Johnston, of Kingswood, Sydenham Hill, London, and registered in his name on December 16, 1897.
3. She was sold to Martin Diederich Rucker, of 28 Ely Place, London, on April 2, 1898.
4. She was mortgaged to the British Maritime Trust Limited, of Fen Court, Fenchurch Avenue, London, on April 15, 1898 (Mortgage dated April 12th to secure an account current with interest at 12 per cent.).
5. She was sold to Daniel Cooper, of Warren Tower, Newmarket, Suffolk, and registered in his name July 20, 1898.
6. Discharge of mortgage of British Maritime on August 4, 1898.
7. She was sold to Albert Edward Prince of Wales, and registered in his name on May 20, 1899.

The Prince of Wales having repurchased the Britannia, raced her a few times in 1899, and I have referred to these races (see page 6).

8. The Prince of Wales sold the Britannia for a second time, in the year 1900. This time she was sold to Sir Richard Henry Williams Bulkeley, Baronet, of Baron Hill, Beaumaris, Anglesey, and registered in his name October 18, 1900.

Sir Richard Bulkeley, the present Commodore of the Royal Yacht Squadron, now reduced the canvas of the Britannia by shortening

her spars. He took her to the Menai Straits, and used her for some time as a cruising yacht.

9. Sir Richard Bulkcley sold the Britannia in 1901–2 to King Edward. His Majesty thus became owner of the famous yacht for the third time. No bill of sale, however, was produced, and King Edward's ownership was never 'registered'. In December 1910 Sir Richard wrote to the Registrar in Glasgow, and pointed out that the yacht was shown in the *Mercantile Navy List* as still owned by him, whereas she was then the property of His Majesty King George V. Steps were then taken to have the title of H.M. King George recorded, which was accomplished by means of a bill of sale dated February 23, 1911, granted by Sir Richard Bulkeley to His Majesty King George. The Britannia was registered in the King's name on March 11, 1911.

The foregoing is the actual history of the change of ownership of the Britannia. Of course none of the persons who became possessed of the yacht ever put her in commission, or so far as I know set foot on board her, with exception of Sir Richard Bulkeley, who, as a great yachtsman, made good use of the beautiful vessel.

In December 1910 Mr. J. R. Barnett, as successor to her original designer, Watson, submitted plans for fitting higher bulwarks to Britannia, as at that date King George had no thought of her ever being again used for racing. Bulwarks two feet in height were placed round her, and she first sailed, cruising in the Solent, with these bulwarks in the season of 1911.

I am often asked what was the original cost of the Britannia? Mr. Barnett assures me that in 1893, complete with sails and all cabin furnishings, she cost under £8,000. She is 221 tons Thames measurement, and £40 per ton in those days used to be a common estimate of the price of building a yacht.

The actual cost of building a new yacht to-day for racing, with approximately the same cabin accommodation and racing speed, would be about three times the original price of the Britannia.

I have recorded that after her original racing career was over, and the yacht passed out of the ownership of the Prince of Wales in December 1897, the Prince bought her back again and kept her for the season of 1899.

BRITANNIA CLOSE-HAULED IN THE YEAR 1927

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At that time Sir Thomas Lipton was tuning up an enormous cutter called the Shamrock I, which Mr. William Fife had designed for him for a challenger for the America's Cup. The Britannia had been laid up for a year, and was brought out and used a few times as a 'trial horse' against Sir Thomas Lipton's Shamrock I. The Britannia, by the way, had no new sails, and my opinion was that she wanted new copper and was altogether in inferior trim to what she had been in her first racing career. The Shamrock I could obviously beat her easily on level terms, as she was much greater rating and had far more canvas. I thought the trials of Britannia and Shamrock I were of no use whatever.

The sport of first-class yacht-racing in 1899 was very nearly defunct. As Cutter-racing, it was dead. I had been appointed Secretary to the Yacht Racing Association in 1898, and when I took up the work the whole of first-class racing was in a state of decay.

The result of the alterations to the time allowance scale in 1896 had been that Meteor, Ailsa, and Satanita were by the year 1899 all altered from cutter to yawl rig in order to evade the time allowance. The late Mr. Charles Orr Ewing had built an enormous schooner called the Rainbow, designed by Watson, and Mr. Howard Taylor had bought the smaller cutter Bona.

The Meteor carried very nearly as much sail as a yawl as she did as a cutter. Her rating was reduced by the alteration of rig from 101 to 92·4. The Britannia's rating was 97.

The schooner Rainbow was scratch, and gave about a minute to the cutter Britannia, nearly 7 minutes to Meteor, and about 20 minutes to Bona. The Britannia in 1899 was beaten twice by the Shamrock in trial races held at Ryde, the Prince of Wales sailing each day in his old yacht. After these trials the Britannia sailed in four other races at Cowes and Weymouth, but she did not win a prize.

The speed of the Meteor under her yawl-rig in 1899 took everybody by surprise at Cowes. As a cutter her sail area was 12,320 square feet. Re-rigged as a yawl she carried 11,812 square feet, a reduction of only 514 square feet of canvas. She set a jackyard topsail of 1,820 square feet. As a cutter her main-boom was 96 feet; as a yawl it was

70 feet. Not only could the Britannia not *give* 5 or 6 minutes to the Meteor in her yawl-rig, but even had she been tuned up to her old form she could only have kept level with Meteor.

The success of the yawl was certainly a complete revelation. We had previously been taught that yawls would not look at cutters when turning to windward, but the Meteor in 1899 utterly outsailed the cutters Britannia and Bona in short tacks to windward in a smart breeze. At Cowes she won 8 first prizes out of 9 starts, and on the only occasion she was defeated she burst her bobstay.

Britannia's brief reappearance in 1899 was not a success. She passed out of the racing lists. We were not to see her gallant colours at the topmast head again for fourteen years.

CHAPTER VII

UNDER THE CABIN LAMP

THESE reminiscences of the Britannia and her contemporaries are written from my personal recollections of the racing. The story I have told in the preceding chapters is that of an observer from the decks of other vessels of smaller size, because in the final decade of the last century I was generally racing in yachts smaller than those of Britannia's class. Like many other yachtsmen, I looked on at those matches of the big cutters with keen interest and admiration, and longed for the opportunity to sail aboard one of them. When I got a chance I did not miss it. Times changed. In the year 1900 I was appointed Yachting Editor of the *Field*, and it has fallen to my lot to go a racing in most of the First Class Yachts ever since:

> Racin' every day of the week,
> Every day except Sunday;
> We finishes up of a Saturday night
> And goes racin' again on Monday.

So say the boys in the fo'c'sle.

It is strenuous work, but the life is full of health. In these days of crowded cities, and when the highways and byways of the country roads are overrun with motor-cars, it is well to seek the solitude of the sea away from the noise and dust of shore. The rackety outboard motor-boats invade our ports and do their best to destroy the silence of a summer's night whenever we are near to land, but in our voyages round the coast we do not meet them far from home where the white-crested blue seas are leaping.

The sport of British yacht-racing is pure enjoyment for the man who is fond of the sea and wants sport.

Roughly speaking, a racing yacht is put into commission early in May. She remains in commission until the first week in September. If a yacht owner decides to put in a whole season, he will begin racing about the end of May and finish at the end of August. During that time he will sail about forty races. The usual routine is to begin on the Thames estuary and at Harwich, and then go to Dover. Next the yachts proceed round Land's End to the Welsh coast and Kingstown. Then to the Firth of Clyde, where early in July they race for a fortnight. Thence to Belfast Lough and back down the St. George's Channel, round the Longships to Falmouth. Up the English Channel to the Solent for Cowes Week and the height of the holiday season beginning early in August. Here there are social functions ashore, and society assembles as at Ascot and Goodwood. At Cowes much of the best yacht-racing takes place, and we race every day. Whilst it is of course true that many men and women disport themselves at Cowes in yachting costume who know little or nothing about yachting, and care less for the sport, it is wrong to suppose that Cowes regatta is merely a social display. I know no club where the sporting arrangements for all classes of yachts are better carried out than at the Royal Yacht Squadron at Cowes. The social arrangements, people tell me, and I dare say they are right, are old-fashioned and exclusive. As each year their attraction appears to be enhanced, I can only assume they are singularly successful. The gardens and lawn of R.Y.S. Castle at Cowes during the week are crowded with the prettiest girls and the nicest people, and sometimes when I hear it said that their reigns about the place an exclusiveness which is not found anywhere else in the world in these days, it occurs to me that if it were not so, there would not be standing room for the members to whom the Castle belongs! They have always shown me the greatest kindness and hospitality. Every year I help to make the 'handicaps' for their races, and I speak with authority when I say that for many years the accuracy and precision of the Sailing Committee of the Royal Yacht Squadron in conducting their regatta under the Yacht Racing Association's rules has not been exceeded, if, indeed, it has been equalled upon any part of the coast.

After the close of the Solent season the racing fleet proceeds to Bournemouth, Weymouth Bay, Plymouth Sound, Torbay, and Dartmouth.

If a yacht owner goes the round of all these regattas with his racing yacht, it will be gathered that he not only sails some forty races, but his yacht has made about 1,500 miles of sea passages besides in the course of the three and a half or four summer months.

Added to this, during the times of which I have written in the preceding chapters, the Britannia sailed in the spring of the year from Cowes to the Riviera and back and raced in the south of France. Britannia and Ailsa thus sailed 60 races in one year.

This was a heavy strain on the scantlings of the yachts and their gear and upon the crew.

The average yacht-race for large yachts is about 40 miles, and takes about five hours. The crew have to begin to get ready for racing at six o'clock in the morning, and they have not finished their job and stowed away until tea-time or later.

Whatever size a racing yacht may be—if she is large enough to go this round of regattas I have named—the owner of the yacht should be able to live on board her with comfort. The smallest racing yacht at the present time which can be used as a residential home is a 'Twelve Metre', about 21 or 23 tons displacement and 35 tons Thames tonnage. The largest class at the present time is the '24-Metre Class'.

A 24-metre is about 120 tons displacement and 175 tons Thames tonnage. The 12-metre is 41 to 43 feet long on the waterline, and the 24-metre about 76 to 80 feet. The Britannia is 159 tons displacement, 221 tons Thames measurement, and 88 feet on the waterline. The rules of the Y.R.A. provide that all large racing yachts must be classed at A1 Lloyd's and properly fitted internally with cabins. The larger racing yachts are most comfortably fitted and have every luxury. Bath rooms, electric light, and a deck house, living and sleeping cabins of perfect comfort, equal to those of modern cruisers and greatly superior to those of old-fashioned cruising yachts. In some of the smaller racing yachts, I am sorry to say, the *spirit* of the Y.R.A. rules with regard to cabins is not fairly carried out. In

the competition to save weight internally, and thus get more lead ballast on the keel, the designers are apt to skimp the cabin fittings, and barely comply with the *letter* of the Y.R.A. rules instead of their spirit and intention.

The owners of such boats do not personally use their racing yachts as homes, but are wealthy men who live on board steam or motor yachts, and merely use their 12-metre yacht for racing.

This evasion of the rules has always been a very bad thing for the sport of yacht-racing, because it is all against the class of yachtsmen who take the greatest personal interest in their boats, i.e. the owners who live aboard their boats and use them as homes. It favours the richer man who can afford to maintain both a racing yacht and a steam or motor yacht also, and it militates against the chances of the poorer man who wishes to use his racer as a residence.

For many years the question of fitting racing yachts with properly built and fully equipped cabins has been a bone of contention. I am strongly in favour of all those racing yachts which go round the coast, including the 12-metres, being fully and properly fitted. The additional fittings required to make a yacht conform to the yachtsman's idea of 'a floating home' *cost* very little. On the other hand, they *weigh* a good bit. If all weigh the same, the weight is of no importance. Every man in the class is treated equally. The effect of the fittings is to greatly improve the internal comfort and appearance of the yacht and to increase the chance of getting a good price for the boat when she is sold. When a man goes down to a shipyard and sees a small racing yacht such as a 12-metre for sale, and finds her cabins well equipped with beds which are comfortable to sleep upon, chests of drawers which will open and shut and have good capacity, and the cabins well lined, divided by substantial bulkheads, and lit by good skylights, he is attracted by her. On the contrary, if her internal fittings barely comply with the Y.R.A. rules, and she looks below decks like a third class railway carriage, he is repelled. I consider that the subject of cabin fittings in the smaller racing yachts is one which requires much more attention given to it by the Y.R.A. than it has received in the past, and that it would be

greatly for the good of the sport if rules were made to compel the fittings of the smaller racing vessels to be considerably heavier and altogether more substantial. Such regulation would do no harm to those yachtsmen who live on board steam yachts and only use their racing yachts as day boats, and it would prove most attractive to many men who wish to make the small racing yacht a summer home.

I am sure many more sporting people would be attracted by yacht-racing if it were more widely known that racing yachts were so comfortably fitted with cabins. Many of those I meet are surprised to learn that racing vessels are not mere shells or sailing machines. As a fact they are good sea boats, for they are bound to be if they are to be equal to sailing the long passages round the British coast.

Much of the beauty of the sport of yacht-racing lies in its variety and uncertainty. If we race at twenty different ports on the coast, each course is utterly different, and calls for a variety of qualities in the vessel. Many points are tested, the vessel herself is tested by long reaches in smooth water, short tacking along the edge of a sandbank against wind and tide, or through a narrow channel between two sands when she must be very quick in stays to make the short boards. There is the long run under spinnaker, the long close-hauled pinch, the broad reach with a tremendous breeze trying the maximum speed. The short head sea which shakes the ship at every punch, the long, easy, but big sea met with off Dover in which a short-keeled yacht may lose speed through the difficulty of steering. Then again the light, calm days, with scarcely a breath of wind on the water and light variable airs aloft, wherein one yacht may suddenly gain a huge and unexpected lead. Such a day is still further complicated by a rolling swell which shakes the wind out of the sails, or a tide which compels us to drop the kedge. The racing season tests helmsmanship in many phases. The art of manœuvring for position at the start between the five-minute guns requires nerve and judgment. The helmsman must jockey for position, and be fair to his opponents, and not over jealous to get the best position. There comes later on the planning or working out of the tacks 'keeping between your next opponent and the mark' if you are

ahead, or 'keeping your wind clear' when you may be astern, a series of manœuvres which are as many in their permutations as those of a game of chess. Pilotage must play an important part at many of these ports, but none at all at others. Whilst every day there is the same importance in trimming the sails and handling them smartly. Rounding the marks in the course, and setting the course for the next mark is not merely a matter of navigation or reckoning in a yacht-race, the amount lost or gained is often dependent upon the manœuvres of one's opponent or opponents. The prize is of comparatively small monetary value, and there is no betting upon yacht-racing.

On most days, ordinary summer days when yacht-racing, we try to obstruct our opponents by blanketing them or taking the wind out of their sails, and they do the same to us, for that within certain rules is part of the game, and it adds to the variety of the sport.

One yacht *never under any circumstances whatever* tries to place another in any position of danger. That is considered by all yacht-racing skippers most unseamanlike, unsportsmanlike, and beyond the pale.

Sometimes a race is sailed in very heavy weather, when wind and sea are almost too bad for racing at all. When this occurs I have found that all the great yacht-racing skippers I have known appear to mutually abandon all tactics or manœuvres likely to hamper or obstruct an opponent. Then, in this foul weather, when the chances of accident, or of a yacht momentarily or temporarily 'taking charge' in some heavy sea or sudden squall are possible, we all of us sail for ourselves alone, and keep well clear of our rivals just as we should do if we were cruising. On such days the mighty elements themselves are the opponents of all of us, and we have all our work cut out to contend with them.

A landsman asked me, 'What is there to describe in a yacht-race? When you have described one,' said he, 'you have told the story of them all.' To such ignorance of the sport of yacht-racing the sailor is hardly able to reply except in nautical and unparliamentary language. It is impossible for any two yacht-races to be alike. Few possess similar conditions.

The day's sport is long. When it is over, and evening in the still anchorage has come, our opponents arrive alongside and join us in the saloon, cigars are lit, George the steward places the whisky and soda on the table, and we fight the battle over again under the cabin lamp. The racing cutters are the chief object of interest at all the yachting ports they visit, local yachtsmen have the opportunity of seeing them only once a year, and the discussion of their quality and appearance runs high as soon as the tall masts come into harbour and anchor chains rattle through the fair leads. Yachtsmen love a yarn, the cruising men criticize the tall masts and slender rigging of the racers, and tell us that we ought to have high bulwarks, which in racing we do not want because they would scoop up the water and wet us knee deep every time we tack. The cruising yachtsman is apt to forget that to make our racing port we too have been cruisers, and have cruised a thousand miles.

The sporting young gentleman, whose energy I admire and envy, who belongs to the ocean yacht-racing fraternity, and sails a gallant race across the Atlantic Ocean or from Cowes round the Fastnet once a year, wonders why we do not put the yachts into a race across the Bay of Biscay, or round the British Isles instead of sailing twice round a twenty-mile triangle, or up and down the Solent in smooth water. He wonders we do not make a better effort to test our ships and our seamanship!

I do not know. I can only say to those who go in for ocean races that such events are a different form of sport to this kind of yacht-racing in which I have been sailing for nearly forty years. My own experience at sea—I may be wrong—has taught me that there is supreme sport in sailing yacht-races by daylight, but there is very little sport to be gained in racing by night, because at night a yacht should shorten sail, whereas when I am racing I crack on every stitch the yacht can carry. Those yachts I have seen which appeared suitable for an 'ocean' race would be the dullest company even in a second-rate cruisers' match on a flashing and sparkling day's racing on the Firth of Clyde. On the contrary, no doubt the modern racing cutters which race round the coast, and are suitable for such purpose, are not a suitable type to race across the Bay of Biscay.

The 'best type' of yacht is a question which has been talked out under the cabin lamp by yachtsmen ever since I was a boy. The modern hull type now built in the 'metre' classes is a good useful type of yacht either for cruising or racing anywhere round the British coast. The modern rig of a 'metre' class yacht is too high for cruising, but it is suitable for racing, and can be easily cut down. As cutting down the rig is the cheapest kind of alteration a yachtsman can make if he wants to alter a boat from a racer to a cruiser, it is certainly true the new 'metre' class fulfils a most useful purpose.

I am not prepared to say what is the most likely type to win an ocean race, but the type of hull and rig of the American yacht Nina, which won the Transatlantic Ocean race from Sandy Hook to Spain and the Fastnet Ocean race of 1928, would not be very suitable for any ordinary purpose in sailing either in races or cruises about the British coast.

When the Nina won the Fastnet race of 1928 there were no British-designed competitors in the race with any pretentions to be racers. The 12-metre yacht Vanity, for instance, had she been sailed by Mr. John R. Payne, would have beaten any of the British-designed competitors in the 1928 Fastnet race out of sight in a few hours. The victory of the American schooner Nina, in my opinion, was a foregone conclusion in the Fastnet event of 1928, because she was a new vessel specially built for ocean racing, with nothing but a lot of very indifferent boats against her. The subject, I am told, is a highly contentious one, so perhaps I had better change it and spin my

Yarn about a Dog

I will tell it under the cabin lamp. Lying near to us one evening after we had been racing was a schooner, and her owner sent a note to me and asked me to dine. He was a genial, hospitable fat German Baron, and a member of the Royal Yacht Squadron, his schooner was a most comfortable boat, and upon her he flew the burgee of the Club, but not of course the White Ensign, which can only be worn by members of British nationality. He was inordinately fond of food, and we had a very good dinner. I was always amused listening to

his stories about his friends, for he was a conversational sort of person with no little sense of humour, and disliked intensely the pompous bearing of the upper classes of his own countrymen and their lack of sportsmanship, whilst he expressed freely his admiration of English gentlefolk and their mode of life. He told me this story:

'You know, of course, Steward Vurdley. Everypoddy knows him, a sharming vellow.' I said I did not know him personally, but only by name, thereby placing myself outside that inner coterie of society in which the Baron was then a popular, though perhaps a slightly ridiculous figure. 'Vell, Steward Vurdley, as you know, is a member of the Royal Yahct Squadron. But I must tell you. You know this law you have here, the Gwarondine of Togs, it is very strict. Six months.' (I said I knew about the Quarantine of Dogs.) 'Vell, it is a very good law. In England all English people observe the law. You do so naturally without gombulshon. In Germany we do so by gombulshon. In England you neffer have gombulshon. I hate gombulshon, that is why I live so much in England, but I am most bunktilious about observing the law when I am in England. I am most bunktilious about observing all the rules of the Royal Yahct Squadron also. I say always to my skipper he must also observe all the etiquette of the flags of the Royal Yahct Squadron. I insist he shall be most bunktilious. You know, of course, Steward Vurdley's vife, she breeds Boodles.' (I said I knew that Mrs. S. W. bred poodles.) 'Vell! I tell you. The other day when I was at Havre with my schooner I meet Steward Vurdley, he say to me, "My dear vellow, you can do me a favour." I say, "I am delighted, tear lad, to do anything for you." He say, "It is to oplige my vife." I say that make the pleasure the greater; vot does Mrs. Steward Vurdley vish? He say, "It is this damn nonsense about the Gwarondine of Togs. My vife has here a most favourite Boodle, and she vish to get him to England. How the hell I can get the pluddy Tog to England? I am at my wits' end, but I promise my vife I do so. Hein! now I meet you, and you are bound for Gowes to-night in your schooner. It is most fortunate and opportune. I send my servant to put the Tog on board your yahct this evening, and you vill take him to Gowes and land him, and so avoid him being hung for six

months in Gwarondine. My vife vill be most awfully pleased." I say, "My dear fellow, this is impossible. I cannot, it is against the law." He say and laugh—you know the cholly way Steward Vurdley has with him—"Oh rot, the law does not matter." But I repeat very seriously, "My dear Steward, I cannot schmoggle the Tog. You do not realize that I fly on my schooner the burgee of the Royal Yahct Squadron, and it would be a most awful disgrace to schmoggle a Tog under the flag of the Klob!" This make Steward Vurdley laugh enormously, and I then what you call tumble to the choke and laugh also; and so we dismiss the subject, and go and have a whisky and soda at the Société des Régates. But as we part I just say to him, "You must not think me too bunktilious. I would do anything to oblige Mrs. Steward Vurdley, but this is a question of the burgee of the premier yahct clob to which I as a foreigner have much honour to belong, and to break the Gustoms law when that flag flies, you will understand I cannot." So I leave him. That night I sailed for Gowes. I find myself distressed to think that I have not been able to oblige Steward Vurdley and his vife—charming people. Once in the night when in my punk I think I hear a Tog park Wuff! Wuff! Wuff! three times, so! but I sleep again, it is a dream and naturally, for I have thought much about our laughing over schmoggling the Tog. We drop anchor in Gowes Roads. In the morning, when I come on deck, alongside is the Gustom House Officer. He says to my skipper, as a matter of form only I know well, "Have you anything to declare?" and the skipper say, "No." Then the Gustom House Officer, a most courteous good fellow I know very well, turn to me and say, "Good morning, Baron, I ask your Captain if anything to declare, and he say 'No.' It is a strange thing. I have a telegram from the French Gustoms at Havre to say you have on board a Tog, and we have to make inquiries on account of the Gwarondine of Togs. You will forgive me I am sure, it must be a mistake. The telegram say you take on board late at night at Havre a plack Boodle Tog." I say, "We have no Tog," and no sooner my words spoken than Wuff! Wuff! Wuff! the Tog park three times, and up on deck comes Steward Vurdley's pluddy Boodle, lift his leg against the binnacle, and race round the deck as if he owned the pluddy

schooner. Got im Himmel! it was a dirty trick Steward Vurdley play on a fellow-member of the Royal Yahct Squadron. I vas in a hell of a rage vith him; he must have dipped my skipper to ship the dam Boodle, and they all in the choke together. I have much difficulty to explain my position to the Gowes Gustom House that I am so bunktilious about the law and not a "common schmoggler of pluddy Boodle Togs," and the Chief Gustoms Officer he laugh as much as Steward Vurdley, but I tell him it is no choke. This morning I receive from Mrs. Steward Vurdley a most charming note thanking me for being so sweet as to give her favourite Boodle Bonto a passage to Gowes in my schooner. She ask me to propose myself to stay with them at Highcliffe any time and see the Boodles which she preeds. Ach! the English and their chokes! they are difficult for my countrymen to understand—it takes years to know them—in some matters they also are the most bunktilious. In Germany we have no such chokes.'

His servant came in to say the dinghy was alongside, and I wished him good night.

'You race to-morrow in the 19-metre?' he inquired.

'Yes,' I replied; 'the best of sport and no time allowance.'

'I vish you goot luck and virst brize. If I had a racing yahct I vould have a 19-metre. I vould have no handicap; all my vriends crumble at the handicap, including my Emperor. Ach! but you are the handicapper! I do not envy you your chob! Goot night and blenty of vind.'

So to my boat. The sound of oars and a summer's night, the waters of the Bay of Weymouth like glass, and lit with phosphorescence as the blades dip into the darkness. The reflection of the riding lights trembles in the seas as the yachts roll in a tiny swell, the cabin lamp shows dim through the skylight on deck.

He had the instinct of a sportsman, and I heard he held a Staff appointment afterwards in the German Army in the War. I believe he wrote a book about it.

CHAPTER VIII

THE INTERIM

BRITANNIA retired from racing in 1897, and, except for a few days in August 1899, she was not heard of again as a racing yacht until 1913. It is rather strange that in so long a lapse of time her type and form should not have become so out-of-date as to be altogether useless for racing purposes. For sixteen years we had forgotten her.

In the years 1913 and 1914 King George raced her, and then came the War. It was not until the seasons of 1920 and 1921, when yacht-racing was reopened, that Britannia began her second career of serious racing, and met in the course of her races the yachts of more modern type against which she could really test her speed. My readers will therefore realize that the lapse of time between Britannia's original career as a racing yacht and the beginning of her second racing career was in fact about twenty-three or twenty-four years. From 1897 to 1920–21. The reason why the Britannia, a champion first-class cutter built thirty-six years ago, is able to race with first-class cutters to-day is not because there have been no improvements, alterations, and experiments in the type of racing yachts and their design during that long period. On the contrary, many experiments have been tried, great improvements have been made, and the number of alterations has been enormous. The changes, however, since 1897 have proceeded in a curious cycle. For a number of years the cycle of the sport and the trend of racing-yacht architecture took a definite direction away from what I may call the 'Britannia idea'.

Then, after a lapse of years, that cycle took a different direction. Slowly but surely its new direction led us back towards the 'Britannia idea'.

Thus we find to-day, thirty-six years after the Britannia was built,

the old vessel is again in the hunt. Once more she represents a very sound and satisfactory expression of the modern conception of the ideal racing yacht.

I do not for one moment wish to exaggerate the capabilities of the Britannia as compared with the latest productions of our skilled designers of the present day. Rating for rating the newest boats can beat the Britannia most days of the week. They cannot, however, do so by much. The latest productions, owing to the increase of knowledge of our leading naval architects, can develop higher speed for their immersed length than Britannia. They can do so on a plain reach.

In smooth water they can do so even to windward. They are faster owing to being able to be handled with lighter gear, and their hull form, with less wetted surface or frictional surface, will gather speed more quickly in light and moderate wind. But on the whole the 'improvement' which the most modern productions can claim is not very great, although I am sure there is not the least doubt it is definite.

The advantage, however, is not wholly on the side of the newest yachts. On certain heavy, dirty, rough days, which occur occasionally during an English racing summer, the more stalwart gear of the Britannia gives her an advantage over the new vessels. In heavy weather the new British Bermudian-rigged cutters, however, are not to be despised. As long as their stuff stands, in hard weather, rating for rating, they can beat Britannia. Their stuff does not always stand. Britannia's stuff stands grandly.

Drive the Britannia with nerve, and upon her own day anybody will have a job to beat her. Thus, after thirty-six years, she is still a worthy competitor in the very best company.

I have spoken of the 'Britannia idea' as applied both to the 'sport' of yacht-racing, and to the 'type' or 'form' of the yacht herself, and I have said that the cycle of the sport and the trend of yacht architecture drifted away from the 'Britannia idea', and then after a lapse of years the curve distinctly came back to it. The departure of the curve and its return took place between 1897 and the present day. I will explain what I mean. Firstly, what do I mean by the 'Britannia idea' when the term is applied to the sport of first-class yacht-racing?

The 'Britannia idea' means to form a class of large yachts of *approximately* equal size or rating and race those yachts together on a very small time allowance. Thus: If the rating is, say, 90 feet, then yachts of 86, 87, 88 up to 90 or perhaps up to 91, can race in the class, but not vessels either larger or smaller than 86 or 91. The 90-footer would give time allowance by the scale to the smaller vessels, and receive time from the 91-footer. That was the 'idea' or practice when Britannia, Calluna, Valkyrie, Satanita, Navahoe, Vigilant, etc., raced so successfully in 1893 and 1894.

It is the *same idea* upon which we base our sport in the present year, 1929. The class of big yachts is 24 metres. Yachts of 21, 22, 23, and 24 metres may race in the class, but not a new yacht larger than 24·2 metres. Any *new* yacht *must* be built within these sizes. The only criticism I have to make is that in our modern class of 1929 the margin of size is too big. We are allowed to build from 21 to 24 metres. From 22, or even 23, to 24·2 would be far better.

Why? Because the lesson we have learned from the history of Britannia and her contemporaries teaches us most clearly that only very small time allowance is required, and that long time allowance kills sport. The 'Britannia idea' in relation to sport means a lot of yachts of as nearly as possible the same size—and I may add the same rig, that is cutters, not yawls and schooners mixed with the cutters.

When Britannia and her contemporaries raced in 1893 and 1894 this system or idea prevailed. From 1897 onwards the cycle of the sport turned away from this idea, and as surely as it departed from it the sport of first-class yacht-racing deteriorated and collapsed.

Let us glance at the history of the sport and see what happened.

In 1897 the large cutter Meteor was at one end of the class, and the small cutter Bona at the other. Britannia and her contemporaries went out of the sport, and the result was lamentable. In 1898 the big schooner Rainbow was raced on time allowance against the small cutter Bona. This gave no sport at all. The margin in size was far too great. In 1899 the Meteor, to evade the long time allowance, was converted to yawl-rig.

In 1900 the yawl Sybarita was built the same size as the Meteor, but in 1901 and 1902 they had to meet the smaller cutter Kariad,

THE 90-FOOT YAWL SYBARITA, 1900–01

DESIGNED BY G. L. WATSON

The author was on board this vessel when she won the famous Ailsa Craig Match for 500 guineas against the cutter Kariad. This yawl then averaged 12·4 knots over the course of 75 miles

and again a time allowance and difference of rig spoiled the sport. First-class yacht-racing died out altogether in 1903, and until 1905 there was nothing but handicap racing.

In the year 1906 an attempt was made to revive first-class yacht-racing. Mr. Charles Nicholson built the Nyria, a cutter of 80·1-rating, for Mr. R. W. N. Young. Sir James Pender bought the Watson cutter Kariad and converted her to yawl-rig. Mr. Myles Kennedy altered his cruising yawl White Heather I, designed by Fife, to cutter-rig. On a 40-mile course the cutters Nyria and White Heather, being nearly the same size, had excellent racing, indeed the best since the matches between the equal yawls Sybarita and Meteor. White Heather gave Nyria only 2 minutes 41 seconds on a 40-mile course, and the new Nicholson boat Nyria won 17 firsts and White Heather 15 first prizes. This racing, however, which took place for the nine years after Britannia retired in 1897, was but a shadow of the class racing of her original career.

In the year 1907 the International Yacht Racing Union was formed. I had been working for several years to try to bring all the European nations together and to induce them to adopt the same rules for yacht measurement. My efforts were crowned with success in 1907, and all European countries adopted those uniform rules for the measurement of yachts, which, with numerous modifications, have since spread all over the world.

The new classes of yachts were known as the 'Metre' Classes. In these classes the whole principle of yacht-racing was changed. The idea was not to give the owner the option of building a vessel of any rating *between*, say, 52 feet and 65 feet, or *between*, say, 65 feet and 75 feet rating, but to cause the owner to build his yacht exactly at the highest rating. The new International Classes for cutters were 19 metres and 23 metres. Every yacht was compelled to be built exactly of this size. There was no time allowance whatever. The I.Y.R.U. thus aimed at the highest possible ideal. In the 23-metre class the ideal was to form a class of yachts nearly as big as a Britannia, and 'all absolutely level' like a pack of 40-raters, 20-raters, or a mere small boat, 'Solent Class'. What was the result? Mr. Myles Kennedy built the White Heather II, Sir Thomas Lipton built the

Shamrock, and Sir James Pender the Brynhild in the 23-metre class. No other cutters were built of this size. The second class of 19 metres was a little better; this produced four yachts, Sir William Burton's Octavia, Mr. A. K. Stothert's Mariquita, Mr. Milburn's Norada, and Mr. Almeric Paget's and Mr. Hennessy's Corona. Little fault could be found with the type of these yachts. They were useful sea-boats, and magnificently built. The principle of the racing proved altogether too exacting and too strenuous. The strain upon the designer's owners and crews in attempting to compete with such huge vessels of equal rating was too great.

The sport of yacht-racing under these conditions from 1907 to 1912 in these big classes did not attract yachtsmen.

Brilliant yacht-races were sailed. Marvellous contests between Shamrock and White Heather in the 23 metres. Equally tremendous races between the great amateur helmsman, W. P. Burton, and some of the best professional skippers, Sycamore and the late Bobby Wringe, in the Octavia and Mariquita in the 19 metres. When I look back upon these races I confess they were too brilliant, too much of a business to be wholly attractive. The cycle of the sport of yacht-racing in these classes from 1907 to 1912 lacked the attraction of the first year of Britannia and her contemporaries from 1893 to 1897.

In the first decade after the retirement of Britannia in 1897 too much margin of size or rating had proved fatal to sport. In the second decade the authorities had gone to the opposite extreme, and no margin whatever was allowed. The result was again disappointing. This experience has led the Y.R.A. to abandon the idea of racing dead level without any time allowance. The Y.R.A. reverted to the Britannia idea of 1893, and has endeavoured to establish a new class of yacht with a margin between 21 and 24 metres. This class already includes the new yachts Astra, Cambria, and Candida, and temporarily takes in the old yachts Shamrock and White Heather, whilst Britannia and Lulworth, although actually of higher rating or greater tonnage, are about the same average speed as a modern 24-metre.

Thus, after a great lapse of time, and after many changes, the main principle of the sport of yacht-racing has returned to the system or basis which prevailed when Britannia was built.

The type or form of the hull of a racing yacht has also to a great extent reverted to Britannia's form. If the reader turns to Plate A, showing the midship sections of yachts designed by G. L. Watson during the years 1893 and 1900, he will notice a considerable change of type. The cutter Meteor, built in 1896 for the German Emperor, at once shows the tendency of the cycle to depart from the wholesome section of the Britannia. The draught of water is greatly increased, the curve of the turn of the bilge is harder. In 1897, when the smaller cutter-yacht Bona was built with the object of beating the Meteor by taking advantage of time allowance, a different section was tried, but in 1900, when the rules made it possible to build an enormous yawl, the Sybarita, it will be seen that the hollowness of the midship section was again exaggeration.

To beat the Sybarita it only became necessary to still further hollow this curve of the transverse section, to still further deepen the keel and reduce its thickness, and to place the lead upon the bottom of the keel in the form of a bulb. This was never actually attempted in any British yacht of Britannia's size because the truth of the story was too obvious, and the waste of money in building an enormous vessel of that extreme type was too great, but it was done successfully in many smaller yachts. It was accomplished by Nathaniel Herreshoff in America in 1903 with the Reliance, which beat the Shamrock III in the race for the America's Cup in that year.

In the American yacht Reliance the cycle had departed from the Britannia's type to greatest extreme known in the history of yachting.

The Britannia with her L.W.L. of 88 feet in 1893 and 90-foot main-boom had 10,300 square feet of sail and a crew of 30 men.

The cutter Reliance with a L.W.L. of 89·6 feet in 1903 had a main-boom of 116 feet; she carried 16,200 square feet of sail and had a crew of 64 men. To the yachtsman of to-day the proportions of this enormous Herreshoff cutter seem incredible. I am not wearying the reader with the details of measurement formulæ, but to see the beauty of the form of the Britannia he should turn to Watson's original lines of the yacht shown on Plan B.

When the beautiful type exemplified in 1893 in the Britannia was departed from in the succeeding types of the next decade, as the

curves of the transverse sections were cut away and hollowed out, and the draught of water increased, the longitudinal sections were drawn out and increased also. It was the transverse sections near to the middle of the vessel that were hollowed out and deepened. Those at the bow and stern were treated by the designer in the opposite manner, they were developed from the V to the U shape, that is, made greatly fuller and very much shallower. The result of these changes was that ten years after the Britannia was built the type of racing yacht had developed into a scow with a fin keel.

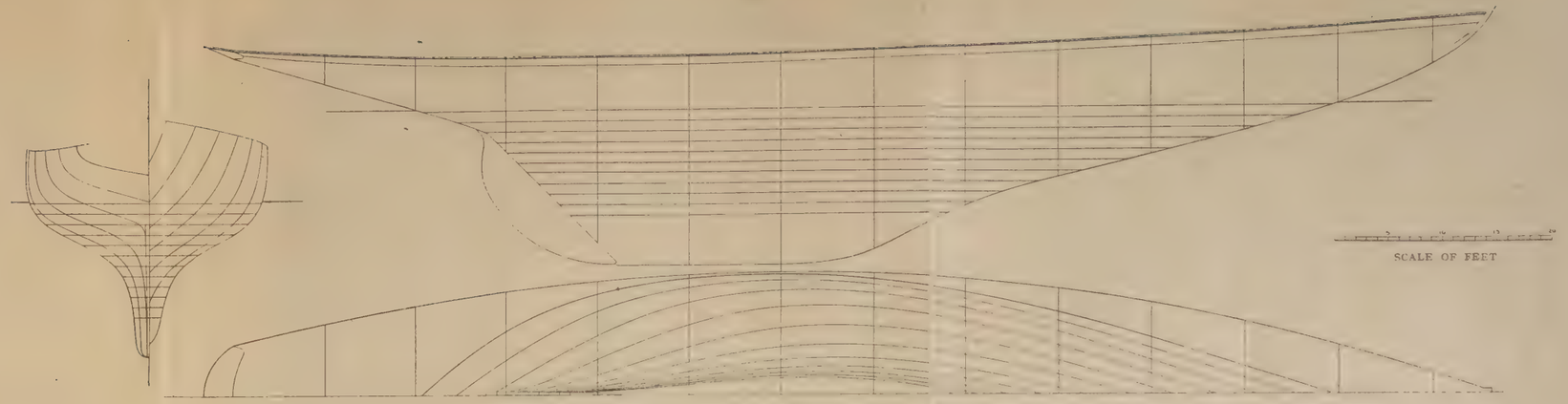
The type had the virtue of great speed, but it was useless for living aboard, and exceedingly costly to run on account of the number of crew required. Yacht-racing in British waters in cutters of Britannia's class was destroyed by such a type. In 1903 our yacht-racing for these cutters was dead in British waters. Then came the reversion to Britannia's type. Scientists got together and made rules, restrictions, and rating formulæ, which, after twenty more years had elapsed, have brought us back to the lines or type shown in Plan B—those which George Watson drew for King Edward when Prince of Wales in 1893.

This is very strange.

This turn of the cycle is the circumstance which enabled King George to bring out the old Britannia again and race her against new yachts. To race her, too, with no small measure of success not as a 'cast-off', 'out-classed', and wholly 'out-of-date' type of yacht, but as a yacht very closely allied to the best type the naval architect can conceive to-day.

I do not wish it to be thought that I am exaggerating the virtue of Britannia, nor that I mean her type is exactly like that of the best boat Fife or Nicholson can now build. The newest boats are closely allied to her type, they are an improvement upon it. They have more freeboard, and are much less wet in heavy seas. It is not easy to measure in precise terms 'how much' better a modern yacht is than Britannia, but from having sailed personally in every race since 1920, either in the Britannia or against her, I should say that our designers have improved upon the Britannia to the extent of about 8 seconds per mile.

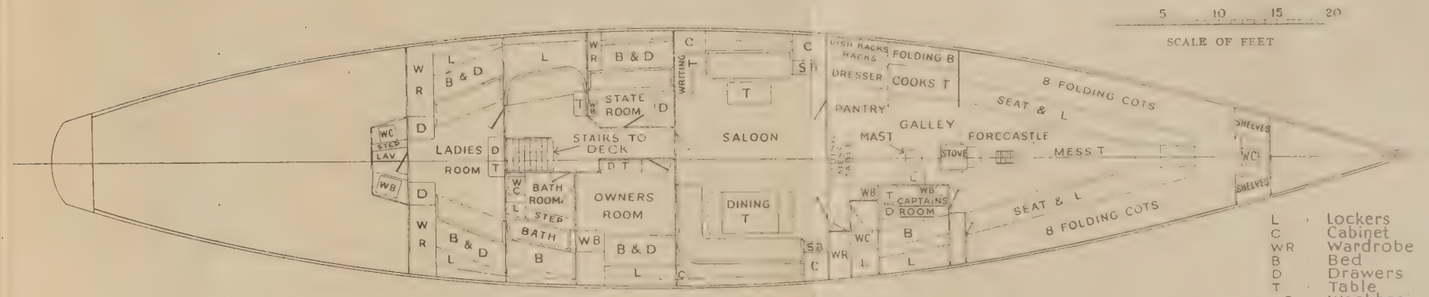
PLAN B



THE LINES

From a Drawing by George Watson, 1893

PLAN C



CABIN PLAN

THE KING'S RACING YACHT BRITANNIA

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That is, by 5 minutes 20 seconds on a 40-mile course.

To explain exactly what I mean by this: If a modern yacht were built of the same rating as the Britannia, I think she would beat the old yacht in average weather by about that amount. A modern yacht built by Fife or Nicholson about 6·25 per cent. to 6·75 per cent. smaller than Britannia, in my opinion, would be fairly handicapped to sail against Britannia on level terms. The type of the two yachts, the one built in 1893 and the other in 1929, would be very much alike. Clever yachtsmen who split hairs could point out certain differences (I have admitted the greater freeboard of the modern yacht), but beyond this change in general terms it is perfectly true to say the hull types would be almost identical.

I consider this a truly remarkable circumstance in the history of the sport of yacht-racing and in the cycle of incidents in the evolution of the King's yacht and her contemporaries.

CHAPTER IX

THE BRITANNIA'S ALTERATIONS AND REPAIRS

THE Britannia had practically nothing done to her hull until thirty years after she was built. She was originally lightly but strongly constructed with steel frames and pitch-pine and America-elm planking, with cedar-wood topsides. This composite construction enables a yacht to keep her shape when subjected to the strain of racing much better than the construction of a yacht with wooden frames.

About the time Britannia was built there was enormous competition amongst designers to use the lightest materials and the least amount of material in building racing yachts. There were no rules or regulations of the Y.R.A. prohibiting the use of light materials, or compelling certain numbers of floors, frames, and beams, or governing their thickness and size, such as we have now. The designer had a free hand to do as he liked. Now he is compelled to build the racing yacht to Lloyd's Class.

I remember that two years before the Britannia was built, in December 1891, I think, I wrote to the *Yachtsman* newspaper and pointed out the desirability of all future racing yachts being built to uniform weight of scantling. Of course I was far too early with my proposal. To make such restriction was then considered by older experts to be an unwarranted interference with the rights of the yacht designer! In 1898 I was appointed Secretary of the Yacht Racing Association, and in 1900 Yachting Editor of the *Field*, and I pegged away at my subject, and I remember in 1904 at Kiel regatta George Watson told me he had changed his opinion and agreed with me that it would be a healthy innovation if the Y.R.A. passed a rule that all racing yachts should be classed by Lloyd's.

'A few of us,' he said, 'know when to get a good drink out of a

SAIL PLANS OF BRITANNIA

THE BLACK LINES SHOW THE ORIGINAL SAIL PLAN OF 1893. THE RED LINES SHOW THE REDUCED SAIL PLAN OF 1910 AND THE HEIGHTENED BULWARKS

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plain bottle, but on the whole the public like to look at the label, and the label of Lloyd's is a good one, and will give yacht owners confidence. It will induce them to build more racing yachts, and that is good for sport.'

It was not until 1907 that the International Yacht Racing Union was formed, and the rule was finally adopted in Europe that all racing yachts must be built to the Rules of Lloyd's Register of Shipping, or those of the similar Classification Societies, which are identical. I believe the New York Yacht Club only in 1928 adopted this tremendously important principle that all their racing yachts must be classed at Lloyds, so in this matter we seem to have been ahead of our American friends. Competition amongst designers to outbid one another in *lightness of construction* is absolutely fatal to the sport of yacht-racing. It results in the fastest racing yacht being an inhabitable machine. Competition amongst designers to outbid one another in *designing the shape* of a yacht is extremely desirable. It results—if the rating rule to judge speed is sound—in producing the highest possible form of sport.

Now, although when George Watson designed the Britannia there were no scantling rules, and in spite of the fact competition was very keen, he did not in 1893 go too far in the direction of light material or the reduction of the quantity used in the construction of her. All her contemporaries had passed away after thirty years; some were too light, others were not, but from whatever cause, by 1922 all had gone to the scrap-heap and Britannia was the sole survivor.

In the winter of 1922 and the spring of 1923, just thirty years after Messrs. D. and W. Henderson built her at Glasgow, the Britannia, under the supervision of Mr. J. R. Barnett, the present head of the firm of G. L. Watson and Company, was thoroughly overhauled by Mr. G. Marvin, the yacht builder at Cowes. No alteration whatever was made in the shape or design of the hull in 1922, but many repairs were done to the construction of the yacht. Those who are fond of yachts will be interested to know what has to be done to a vessel after thirty years. Beyond new copper and renewing deck planks worn by scrubbing and scraping, nothing had been done to Britannia since

she was built. In 1913 and 1914, and again after the War in 1920 and 1921, the Britannia in her 'second career' had been raced hard. She had been re-rigged in 1921—as I shall afterwards explain—and the increase of her mast height was hard upon an old vessel. But her hull was still hanging together, and her original beautiful lines were still preserved unchanged. The yacht was not in commission in the summer of 1922, and in November of that year Mr. Barnett went over the yacht at Cowes and made the following report upon her condition:

H.M.Y. BRITANNIA

I have the honour to report that, on November 14th, I examined this yacht as she lies hauled up in Mr. G. Marvin's yard at Cowes.

Something like ten strakes of planking on each side have been removed from the bottom from the keel upwards, exposing the steel structure.

I took careful note of the deterioration which has taken place in the steel work of the vertical keel plates, floor plates, frames, and reverse frames. This deterioration is considerable, but *the condition of these parts is only what might be expected in a composite vessel of her age. It is necessary to renew a good deal to prolong the life of the yacht.*

I should state at once that, after a careful survey, I consider the yacht to be *well worth the expense* of these repairs. The following work should be done:

Vertical Keel Plates

The two vertical side keel plates should be renewed right fore and aft, as they are much corroded—(*it is wonderful they have stood so long*). I agree that they should be, say, four inches deeper than the original plates, because that will permit a better connection to the frames, the fore and aft flanges of which are now somewhat reduced in thickness. The four diagonal straps each side recommended by Mr. Marvin would be of considerable advantage, and I suggest they be fitted to the frames.

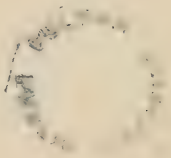
Frames

The twelve reverse frames each side which had been marked, should be taken out and renewed: and I marked a few others that should also be renewed. The original reverse frames were 4/20th inch thick, but I recommend the new ones should be 5/20th inch thick to compensate for the deterioration that has taken place in the fore and aft flanges of the frames.

Floor Plates

The six floor plates that had been marked should be renewed.

THE MASTHEAD OF BRITANNIA, SHOWING THE MODERNIZED CONSTRUCTION



Steel Foundation Plate

I got the steel foundation plate which is fitted on top of the wood keel, *bored at six different places, and was glad to find it in good condition.* I was anxious to know if there was any serious corrosion on the underside of this plate: but, from the boring, apparently there is not.

When the vertical keel plates are removed, the junction between the steel foundation plate and the wood keel will then be exposed, and should be examined, caulked, and payed, before the new vertical plates are fitted.

The well aft in the keel foundation plate should be taken out and the wood keel below it examined.

The angles connecting the vertical keel plates to the foundation plate appear to be satisfactory. These angles should be further examined when the vertical plates are removed, but I expect they will be found free from corrosion. If there is any rust *at all* found on the vertical flange of the foundation angle, it should be thoroughly cleaned off, and coated before the new vertical plates are fitted.

I examined the steel sheerstrake wherever it was possible to see, and it seems to be in good condition. As, however, it *is very important to make sure that this sheerstrake is quite sound in way of the rigging chain plates* which are riveted to it on the outside of the plate, I suggest that it be *bored* at each side of each chain plate to test its condition. I am supplying a sketch indicating how this should be done.

I examined the counter from the inside and found the steel-work satisfactory.

I also examined the bilges right forward, and inside up to the stemhead.

All new steel-work should be galvanized.

All the other steel-work where exposed—by removing the planking and steel referred to—should be cleaned off, chipped, and wire-brushed free of dust, and be thoroughly coated with approved material.

The *wood keel* I examined all along both sides, and *found it sound to the knife.* Through the holes which I had drilled in the foundation plate *I bored into the wood keel about four inches*, to find if it were sound. *I also bored six inches into the wood keel in a horizontal direction* at three spots on each side—that is six in all. These borings satisfy me that there is *nothing seriously the matter.*

The stern-post and rudder-stock were found quite sound to the knife.

I went carefully over the outside planking. The lower strakes of the bottom planking, which have been removed and stored in a shed, should not be put back, because it is so far through. The planks along the waterline that had been marked, should be renewed: and I marked a few others that also should be renewed. There are soft parts showing. The outside planking in way of the main sheet fastening requires attention.

The new bottom planking should be of American elm as before, if proper stuff can be obtained: otherwise, pitch pine may be used, or teak, if it can

be obtained of the requisite length. The inside surface of the planks should be well painted before being fitted to the frames. All faying surfaces should be coated. The outside of the planking, both new and old, should be made thoroughly fair and smooth and then be coated.

All new fastenings should be of the *special metal that the original fastenings were made of.*

I recommend that two main keel bolts, two wing keel bolts, and two keel *tie-bolts be drawn out and examined by bending,* to see that there has been no decomposition in these bolts. The composition covering the nuts of the keel bolts on top of the foundation plate should be removed, the nuts examined, and new insulating composition put on.

I formed the impression that the yacht had been well taken care of. *She is in remarkably good condition, merely showing the 'grey hairs'* that may be expected at her age.

If the work and suggestions recommended in this report be carried out, *Britannia should be quite fit for years to come.*

(*Signed*) J. R. Barnett, M.I.N.A.

All the work so carefully recommended by the distinguished naval architect was carried out. Mr. Barnett had the sheerstrake bored to test whether it was quite sound in the way of the rigging chain plates, he went over the test holes and borings and found the chain plates and sheerstrake in perfectly good condition. A lead-keel bolt and the wood keel tie-bolt were drawn out and tested and found in excellent condition. They were originally made by Charles Henderson and Co., metal merchants, of Glasgow, as were all the metal fastenings of the vessel. Five hundred new fastenings of the same metal were put into the yacht. It is interesting that one of the original metal bolts was tested and stood a tensile stress of 22 tons to the square inch! The construction of the Britannia in 1893 was truly magnificent; to George Watson it was a work of love, and the builders, D. and W. Henderson, used everything of the best. By April 1923 the repairs were practically finished and the old ship was as good as new. Mr. Barnett reported:

I went over all the outside surface of the yacht. The new planking is satisfactory (the old cedar was replaced by teak), and care has been taken to preserve the fairness of the vessel. . . . A considerable quantity of planking beyond the

SAIL PLANS OF BRITANNIA

THE BLACK LINES SHOW THE ORIGINAL SAIL PLAN OF 1893. THE RED LINES SHOW THE INCREASED SAIL PLAN OF 1921

original expectation has been renewed, the total quantity of new planking used was as follows:

Bottom	.. ..	234 ft. of 10 in. × 2½ in. *American elm*
		1,804 ft. of 10 in. × 2½ in. *pitch pine*
Topsides	.. ..	465 ft. of 8 in. × 2½ in. *teak*

I am pleased to state that I have found Mr. Marvin very anxious to give attention to any instructions and suggestions I have had to make, and I have every reason to expect he will complete the work in a satisfactory manner.

Captain Turner was in attendance, and gave me assistance.

I shall send Mr Marvin the original racing waterline so that it may be marked on, as that will be a good guide for getting the yacht into the best trim.

So after her repairs, when she put to sea for another season's racing in 1923, the Britannia was in exactly the same trim as regards her hull as when she was first built in 1893.

When the King visited the Yachting Exhibition at the Agricultural Hall in 1922 an enterprising firm, Messrs. Gayton, showed His Majesty a very clever process of coating wood with thin copper by means of spraying, and the King agreed to try this method upon the bottom of the Britannia if practicable. I saw the samples of the process, and the results upon seamless launches and boats were of the highest degree of excellence. It was not found possible, however, to apply the process over the caulking and filling of the seams and the butts in a vessel of Britannia's construction, and it was considered unwise to attempt the experiment. The new copper sheathing was put on in the usual way. So efficiently and completely were the repairs of the Britannia carried out, that she was eventually given a Classification by Lloyd's Register of Shipping of 18A1.

Alterations to Rig

The rig of the Britannia has been altered four times since she was built, and the nature of the alterations is most instructive. I am indebted to Mr. J. R. Barnett and Mr. Tom Ratsey for giving me the actual drawings of her five sail-plans. These I have arranged in Plans D, E, F, and G. In each case I have taken George Watson's

original sail-plan of 1893 drawn in *black* as the basis, and upon the top of it I have placed in *red* the altered plan. Of course, Mr. Thomas Ratsey, of Cowes, made all her sails, and I may as well say for the information of non-yachting readers that Tom Ratsey is the head of the firm Ratsey and Lapthorn, of Cowes, Gosport, Gourock, and City Island (New York), who makes everybody's sails who go racing. He makes thousands of sails that are almost faultless, and a few bad ones. Not infrequently he makes sails that sit badly, but that is the fault of the ignorant hard-hauling skippers who know nothing about racing sails, and either permit or encourage their crews to pull them out of shape when they are new. There are still many sailing-masters who never will learn that the stretching of sails is a natural process effected by the air and sun and gravity of the cotton, and that hauling has nothing but bad effect upon sails, merely distorting their shape. Mr. Tom Ratsey made all Britannia's sails, and, when in 1894 the American yacht Vigilant came to race against her at Cowes with a suit of American sails, the canvas of the rival to the Prince of Wales's cutter was altogether inferior. The American wished for a new suit by Ratsey, and a great many prominent English yachtsmen wanted the firm to supply them. It was not, however, wholly a matter of business this matter of Britannia *versus* Vigilant at Cowes, it was a question of sport and a fair and square trial of a British-built and rigged yacht against a Yankee-built and rigged. As they were built and fitted, so should they race—during Cowes Week. That was Tom Ratsey's opinion, and the competitors had to abide by it, and the Vigilant met the Britannia with her American sails. The Britannia has always had beautiful sails. In the old days, from 1893 to 1897, John Carter and Mr. Willie Jameson knew how to set them, and at the present time Albert Turner and Sir Philip Hunloke set her canvas to perfection.

Plan D shows how the Britannia's original sail area was snugged down in 1910 when she was intended for cruising. The mast, gaff, boom, and bowsprit shortened. In this rig the old yacht began her 'second career' in 1913 and 1914. She was in those seasons sailed by Sir Philip Hunloke, then Major Hunloke, for the first time. Tried against Wendur and other cruising yachts, it was not possible to form

THE HERRESHOFF SCHOONER WESTWARD, WHICH WAS BEATEN BY THE BRITANNIA AT COWES IN 1920.

an opinion of her speed. After the War, however, in 1920, Sir Philip Hunloke sailed her in the snug rig shown in red in Plan D against some very smart vessels, including the Nicholson cutter Nyria belonging to Mrs. Workman, the White Heather owned by Sir Charles Allom, and the American schooner Westward. In this shortened cruising rig the Britannia was like a reefed yacht, and she made wonderful weather of it in strong breezes and heavy seas.

So well did she go, that there was talk of increasing her sail and making a proper racer of her in 1921. I was sitting in her cabin one day and I sketched out roughly a sail-plan like that of Plate E. I drew the snug existing plan in blue chalk and a proposed increased plan in red chalk upon the top of it; my proposed plan was similar to that shown in red in Plate E.

On August 10, 1920, Mr. Alfred Mylne, the eminent yacht designer, of Glasgow, visited the Britannia at Ryde, at the request of Sir Philip Hunloke, to see about alterations. The idea in view was to be sure that she should still be at her best in strong winds, to increase the height of the sail-plan, but to have no 'Marconi topmast'. The yacht was still to be able to carry whole sail when some of the more modern yachts would have to reduce sail. She was to trust to luck in light winds when in any case her chances were not so good. The cost of the alterations was an important consideration to the King, and strict economy was kept in view.

Mr. Mylne then received an order to design a new rig for Britannia, and he took my rough sketch, and afterwards told me he drew the new plan, Plan E, in red almost the same.

If the reader turns to Plan E he will see that in her new rig of 1921 the Britannia had in the red plan about the same total area of sail as she had in the black plan, which is her original sail area of 1893. There were, however, most important changes in the shape of the plan.

Eight feet were added to the hoist of the mainsail; 3 feet were added to the main-boom. A new and beautiful hollow main-boom, on the rolled principle, was made of ply-wood by McGruer. The jib-halliard block was raised no less than 12 feet to get the new-fashioned height and power to the headsails. At that time a new mast could

not be obtained. Therefore the old mast of 1920 was lengthened by squaring the top of the old spar as a core and glueing side and forward and aft pieces to it, thus lengthening the mast at the top. The new mast was 7 feet longer, deck to hounds, than her original spar. The work of lengthening the mast was done by Mr. George Marvin, of Cowes, under the superintendence of Mr. E. McGruer. New ironwork for the masthead was made and new crosstrees and much lighter gear and new blocks, and at the same time the bulwarks were reduced to about their original height. The King took an active interest in getting these alterations done, and amongst other things he told Mr. Alfred Mylne that the Britannia's original mast had the root of the tree uppermost, presumably to get sufficient diameter at the required place. His Majesty is intensely keen on the Britannia, and is familiar with every detail of her rig-gear and construction. Nothing escapes his eye; but then, he is, of course, a true sailor.

The result of the alterations was a complete success, and I think reflects the highest credit upon Sir Philip Hunloke's management and upon the designer, Mr. Mylne, and the workmanship of Mr. George Marvin, of Cowes, and Mr. McGruer. The vessel faced all weathers, and, after the alterations were made, she was driven in strong winds like the very devil and never carried away anything.

The raising of the headsails to give them driving power was a discovery evolved by trial that designers had effected since Watson's original sail-plan. So it was applied to Britannia for the first time in 1921. It was remarkably successful. Its effect was to enable the Britannia to very nearly hold her own in lighter winds against the yachts of modern construction.

The next alteration to the Britannia's rig was that of Plan F in 1927. Mr. Fife made these alterations. They consisted of a further increase of height, and it will here be seen the hoist of the gaff is far above that of 1893 and 1921. For the first time now the old yacht has a topmast socketed into the top of her mainmast instead of an old-fashion 'fidded' topmast overlapping the mainmast. The height of the jib halliards is here the greatest. The boom is shortened and the gaff lengthened. To take full advantage of the 1927 sail-plan a slight deepening and straightening of the keel of the Britannia was

SAIL PLANS OF BRITANNIA

THE BLACK LINES SHOW THE ORIGINAL SAIL PLAN OF 1893. THE RED LINES SHOW THE SAIL PLAN OF 1927 WITH " SOCKETED " TOPMAST INSTEAD OF " FIDDED " TOPMAST

effected at Cowes by Mr. Fife in the spring of 1927. I believe the Britannia was much improved in a light wind by these changes shown in Plan F, but a rather curious incident happened. One day, when we were all racing during Cowes Week, I was myself sailing in Shamrock; the wind was variable and fluky, and we were leading. The sky became very overcast, and we were turning to windward back from Ryde to Cowes to finish the race. Along the south-east edge of the Brambles the wind increased to a pretty hot puff, and the Britannia completely outpointed and outsailed the Shamrock, and passed high on our weather in a way I had never seen her do before in that weight of wind. All of us—Britannia, Lulworth, Shamrock and White Heather—had every stitch of light weather canvas set: our big jackyarders and working jib-topsails. A noble company. The King was on board Britannia. Sir Mortimer Singer now had bought the Lulworth, a somewhat unlucky big cutter, built by the late Mr. Lee in 1920 and called the Terpsichore, and afterwards re-christened the Lulworth by Mr. Weld, of Lulworth Castle, who sold her to Sir Mortimer. The Lulworth was sailing remarkably well, but the Britannia still better. Lord Waring was aboard his White Heather, and Colonel Neill and I were in Shamrock, and old Sycamore at our wheel. And here, indeed, was a company of noble cutters, even as grand as the old fleet Navahoe, Valkyrie, Satanita, and Calluna, which the Britannia had led into Cowes Roads when I was but a boy of twenty-three years old in 1893.

Now to-day, in 1927, rigged as you see her with the devil's own height of modern sail-plan in my Plan F, here is Britannia leading the fleet into Cowes Roads again. I remember thinking as the black hull of the upstanding Britannia walked past us hand-over-fist between Ryde Middle and the easternmost yachts moored in Cowes Roads, 'This is a wonderful thing.' Duncan Neill, my old friend, said to me, 'Bookstall,' for such is my nickname by some, 'the old Britannia is the best of the bunch yet, they can say what they like.'

Then a deuce of a squall hit us, crashed upon us out of Cowes Roads, when three of us were laying across from the Brambles to Old Castle Point on the starboard tack. Britannia leading, and Lulworth and Shamrock close together. Lord Waring's yacht I could not see, but

White Heather was fizzing along on the port tack somewhere under Norris Castle. The sea was lashed into a white mist of spindrift, and the Shamrock lay down to her skylights. I never saw a yacht more flat. It was one of the hottest and most sudden squalls I remember on a summer's day. We could do nothing. We could not even get the jib-topsail off her for several minutes. But the Shamrock, 23 metres, is a mighty good boat. She was no chicken then, nineteen years old. She was flat on her side, but was still manageable, and old Sycamore was full of heart and confidence. He said to me, 'Can you see the others? I suppose it's the same for all.' He was kneeling at his wheel, and seemed right down in the water, so I climbed up to the weather rail and 'took a look at the others.' Lulworth was rattling and snorting like a horse, she was being jilled, the water streaming from her scuppers. The Britannia was obviously out of hand. Caught in this way with the big sail-plan, they had let her luff too heavy, and she had borne away suddenly and heeled to a great angle, flooded her decks, and come-to again, but she was going faster than Lulworth. As I watched her for a minute or so, I could see Sir Philip Hunloke and a helper with him on her wheel, and the King by them. They soon got her going again, and the Britannia tacked to port in Cowes Roads and came thundering through the line of the Royal Yacht Squadron the winner of the match. The Lulworth was second and the Shamrock third, closely followed by White Heather. I thought that the gallant old Britannia had acquitted herself with credit. We were all caught in rather unseamanlike style, for I suppose we should have got our jib-topsails down and eased our main-sheets much sooner than we did, and should have seen the squall coming.

This incident and some more wild weather the following week at Ryde, I think, led to Britannia's rig being altered for the fourth time for the season of 1928.

In 1928 the rig of Plan F was changed to that of Plan G.

In Plan G it will be seen the height of the gaff is much lower than in the rig of Plan F, with which she encountered the squall of 1927. The mainsail of 1928—Britannia's present mainsail—is almost the same as that of 1893, except for the shorter boom. The present short-boom is higher from the deck than the original long-boom. This is

THE BRITANNIA IN HER PRESENT RIG WITH MARCONI TOPMAST

because all large racing yachts are now fitted with a 'deck-house' instead of the old flat 'companion-hatch'. The sail-plan of Plan G also shows that in 1928 the Britannia abolished the obsolete hoistable topsail-yard seen in Plan F, and was fitted with a 'Marconi topmast' like the new cutters Lulworth, Shamrock, and White Heather. In Plan E, 1921, the Britannia has the old cutter-rig with a *two* yard-topsail and '*fidded*' topmast. In Plan F, 1927, she has the second phase of the cutter-rig with a *two* yard-topsail, and '*socketed*' topmast. In Plan G, 1928, she is shown in the third and most modern phase of the cutter-rig with a 'Marconi' or *one* yard-topsail, the entire height of the mast from deck to top being in one straight line.

Thus the old vessel's cutter-rig has been thoroughly modernized.

The rig of 1928 was wonderfully successful, the Marconi topmast presenting, as it does, a straight luff to the wind, made her more weatherly in any weather in which the big topsail could be set, and that included quite fresh and even strong winds. The Marconi pole stood up splendidly.

Each of these rigs, from the *black* rig of 1893 (disregarding the cruiser-rig of 1910), is an approach towards the 'triangle' of the Bermudian.

Will the King ever rig the Britannia with a Bermudian sail?

It is impossible to answer this question. When I look at her lines in Plan B and the height single line of her mast in Plan G, and when I consider the enormous loss of efficiency due to the weight aloft of the gaff and jackyard seen in Plan G, I cannot but think that the old Britannia would fly like a bird with a Bermudian sail. Think of the relief she would feel if this great gaff and jackyard were removed from her shoulders!

People ask me is the Britannia faster now than she was in 1893?

There is no means of giving a direct and certain answer to this question, but if we look at Plan G we see the total area of the red of 1928 and the black of 1893 is nearly equal. I have no doubt at all that owing to the alteration of the position of the jib and foresail, which are much raised, and the sharper and more triangular form of the entire after sail, she is considerably faster to windward in light, moderate, and fresh breezes. She is probably faster to windward in

smooth water. As the majority of races are sailed in light to moderate winds, it is fair to conclude that she is much improved as a racing yacht in such weather.

There is, however, another side to the question. The *red* mast of Plan G, owing to the high position of the jib and foresail halliards, is obviously not stayed or held in position in such manly fashion as the old *black* mast of 1893, Plan G, with the original separated jib and foresail halliards, which were the fashion in George Watson's time. For this reason I do not think it is possible for Sir Philip Hunloke, or anybody else, to drive the Britannia to-day in really heavy weather like Mr. William Jameson and John Carter drove her from 1893 to 1897 in heavy seas. Science has compelled us in modern racing yachts to raise the headsail halliards—the foreward staying of the mainmast —to such a height in order to obtain efficiency, speed, and weatherliness in the lighter winds, that we have sacrificed some of the healthy good qualities that our fathers enjoyed.

The knowledgeable yachtsman will ponder over these plans showing the alterations which have been introduced into the Britannia's rig. This is the first time her design has been made public, and it is interesting to have George Watson's work before us, to trace with the eye the graceful lines of one of the most beautiful vessels ever built, and to observe how gradual has been the evolution from the first sail-plan to that of the present during the period of thirty-six years.

SAIL PLANS OF BRITANNIA

THE BLACK LINES SHOW THE SAIL PLAN OF 1893. THE RED LINES SHOW THE PRESENT SAIL PLAN, 1928, WHEN THE YACHT WAS FITTED WITH A " MARCONI " TOPMAST

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THE BERMUDIAN-RIGGED CUTTER ASTRA, DESIGNED BY MR. C. E. NICHOLSON IN 1928, LEADING THE OLD CUTTERS WHITE HEATHER AND SHAMROCK

CHAPTER X

RACING DAYS

TO those of us who are getting on in years and have long been taking an active part in one sport or another, as the seasons pass, I think it must always be that some days live in our memory and become so vividly impressed upon our minds that we never forget them. Each of these are red-letter days in our lives. Other sporting recollections come to us as we spin our yarns under the cabin lamp. If a half-forgotten race of thirty years ago is mentioned I may perhaps be able to recall its incidents if I refer to the files of the *Field*, in which I wrote a description of it. It may all come back to me in a few moments when I read my notes. But some sporting days, however long ago, never fade. I have been a participator in most pastimes—hunting, shooting, fishing, village cricket, and yachting. With exception of the latter, in which I suppose it is no exaggeration to say few have had such long and varied practical experience, my part has not been unusual; even so, incidents which thrill the heart I can recall in those other sports as vividly as if they were but yesterday. They still mean much to me, although they are not of the slightest interest to anybody else. One day long over forty years ago, when there was a scent and hounds were running; when I was left and they came towards me again, as they should not have done, their faint music swelling and growing louder every moment, echoing upon the soft autumn breeze through a deep woodland in West Kent. How a hard-run fox broke covert at my end nigh unto me, the bitches screaming down the middle ride with a breast-high scent, and only huntsman, master, and a bare dozen of the best with them, and I, a mere boy on a borrowed, broken-winded thoroughbred which I could not hold, to join with them, taking everything that came over the good sound turf, whether I would or no. Hounds not two hundred

yards behind their fox. Closer and closer yet, and now George Bollen at the very last, cheering hounds with his horn in the old-fashioned way, until Glory to God! they rolled him over right in the middle of thirty acres of grass. And by luck alone it fell to me to see the finish of it. Such moments as those, or some day when one's guns were hot and when one hit 'em, carrying through by instinct just right every time, we can remember. I can recall that hour when, upon a still summer's evening, by accident I had the right-sized fly, and my fly cocked and floated at every cast, until I had difficulty to distinguish it from the real one which the clear water of the Dove carried near to it in the stream, and the trout were equally uncertain and rose freely to my gentle lure. These moments are those which live in the memory of every sportsman, they recur to me as I write—a day here and there better and more thrilling—sweeter and more romantic than a hundred other days; similar, but not the same. Never the same. Never. Because to the sportsman each day's sport is quite different from another.

To the lover of hound work no two days' hunting are alike, to the man who takes an interest in his shooting the same applies, to the fisherman every condition of his careful and observant art undergoes constant change. Therein lies the untiring charm of our country pastimes which never palls upon the sportsman.

With my own sport, yacht-racing, the difference in every sailing match is so extraordinary as to be marvellous. The old Britannia has sailed 457 races. If they averaged thirty miles apiece, she has raced over nearly 14,000 miles of water. In nine seasons, when I have sailed from time to time in her, I have taken part in a good many. Sir Philip Hunloke has steered her and commanded her in all the races I have sailed. He is a natural helmsman of great experience, with ability equal to that of those few men, professional and amateur, who are now in the front rank of helmsmanship in class racing. He plans his tacks well, that is to say, his racing tactics are good. He makes up his mind quickly and decisively, and relies almost exclusively upon his own judgment. Some very good helmsmen do not do so, but rely upon the skipper. I remember an incident in one race which affords an amusing instance of this, when a good old soul,

THE BERMUDIAN-RIGGED CUTTER CAMBRIA, DESIGNED BY MR. WILLIAM FIFE, 1928, SHOWING THE RIG WITH A SINGLE REEFED MAINSAIL

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an old-fashioned skipper, was in the Britannia, and that skipper had been formerly in a yacht in which he gave all the orders. We were running before the wind, and the old skipper said, 'In spinnaker.' 'I did not give the order to in spinnaker,' said Major Hunloke, as he was then; 'haul the spinnaker out again.' 'In that case,' said the old skipper, 'I had better go below.' 'Yes,' said Major Hunloke, 'by all means, and stop there.' And the old man disappeared down the forecastle hatch. I must say, however, to the old fellow's credit, that he soon appeared on deck again, smiling as ever! I may be forgiven for telling the story, for it was a good many years ago, and of course before Captain Albert Turner, the Britannia's present skipper, was in her. Albert Turner, formerly skipper to Sir William Burton in Lucida, Britomart, Ostara, and Octavia, is second to none as the captain of the large crew of a racing yacht, and has proved a splendid skipper during his service in the King's yacht under Sir Philip Hunloke. In helmsmanship, that is racing helmsmanship, every man has his day, even as one wicket suits a batsman better than another. I think Sir Philip Hunloke has a style which is best in a good breeze, rather than in very light and tedious airs. In a life-giving breeze I think his style is similar to that of Mr. John Payne, of the Vanity. He has a remarkable way of getting his boat to windward. In light airs he does not do so well, but it is all very easy for me to say this; nobody could make the Britannia, with her greater wetted surface compared with modern yachts, do much in paltry weather.

The tactics of helmsmanship employed by various steersmen are most interesting. The methods of helmsmen vary greatly. Some men's minds seemed to be much more engaged than others in watching their opponents. Their tactics and strategy is worked out like a game of chess, and is a continuous and cleverly constructed plan, or series of plans, of attack and defence. I am speaking of the greater helmsmen of yachts. The best of those who sail in this way are especially successful when sailing a duel. Sir William Burton is, I think, the greatest master of sailing a plain level match in this manner. Sycamore is a great steersman in a duel. In one season he steered Shamrock in forty level duels against the White Heather, steered by Charlie Bevis, and Sycamore won the rubber by 21 to 19!

But from my observation I count Sir Philip Hunloke and Mr. John Payne amongst helmsmen who do not adopt these tactics of attack and defence as their chief source of strength. Of course, I do not mean to say they do not watch their opponent and weather bow him. Obviously they do not miss a chance of doing that, but on the whole their attention is mainly fixed upon their own boat, and they sail her—like a fisherman sails his smack—so as to get home as fast as possible without bothering too much about what other boats are doing. I do not know any two men who can sail a boat to windward better.

But I will leave these personal criticisms and comparisons and spin a yarn or two about the racing itself.

Some racing days, as I have said, live in our memory. I will tell the story of one or two racing days in the old Britannia. To contradict my previous comments I will recall one race in particular, when the Britannia sailed in a very light wind much faster than any of the modern yachts. It was a red-letter day, and when I come to think of it, it was one of the few days when Sir Philip Hunloke did not take the wheel throughout the race, because we had another helmsman for a good many miles. His Majesty the King took the helm.

This is the little story of the race. It was on Saturday, July 16, 1921, from Southend to Harwich. The competitors were:

Britannia	83·82 feet rating
White Heather	74·87 feet rating
Nyria, in her Bermudian-rig ..	72·87 feet rating

The Britannia's rig on this occasion was with the sail-plan shown in red on Plan E. The additional sail and hoist planned by Mr. Alfred Mylne had raised the Britannia's rating by the rating rule then in force from 82·03 feet in 1920 to 83·82 feet in 1921. The White Heather, owned by Sir Charles Allom, did not carry so much sail as Lord Waring sets upon her to-day, but she had a Marconi topmast and was a very smart cutter. The Nyria was regarded as a nippy little boat, and her enterprising owner, Mrs. Workman, had given Mr. Charles Nicholson, her designer, a free hand to rig the boat as he liked. Charlie Nicholson, always in advance of the current opinion

THE KING ON BOARD THE BRITANNIA. SIR PHILIP HUNLOKE AT THE WHEEL AND THE AUTHOR

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scientifically, had rigged Nyria with an enormous Bermudian mainsail. This was the first Bermudian mainsail ever set upon a first-class cutter. The Britannia's opponents were thus thoroughly up-to-date vessels. The King came down to Southend on Thursday evening and slept on board the Victoria and Albert, which was anchored off the long pier at Southend-on-Sea. On Friday morning it blew great guns, and over the triangular course round the Nore, West Oaze buoy, and the Mouse Lightship the Britannia overpowered her two opponents and won the race.

The next day was the remarkable light weather race which we call 'Down Swin', namely, from Southend to Harwich. There was an absolute flat calm off the pier. His Majesty came on board, and scores of motor-boats and rowing boats gathered about us laden with trippers and sightseers; the pierhead was black with people. It was so calm that we all lay at our kedges. The reader can picture now the three great yachts holding to their anchors, a perfect cloud of canvas, everything set, and the last drain of the flood-tide just lapping their bows. They were completely surrounded by small boats almost touching their sides, the gay and good-natured folk from East London seeming to have every kind of musical instrument. So we all lay for an hour in the blazing heat of the July sun.

I have sailed the old Southend to Harwich match 'Down Swin' a great many times, and in many different yachts in all sorts of weather. I am fully aware that it is the fashion nowadays amongst modern yachting people to decry these East Coast races and the races on the estuary of the Thames, but I disagree with them. The fashionable folk think there is no place like the Solent. Scottish yachtsmen, who certainly know good racing when they see it, do not like the sandy tidal shallows of the Thames Estuary. "Ocean Racing" yachtsmen, who in recent years have sailed one or two races in a season from Cowes round the Fastnet Rock to Plymouth, no doubt regard the races in the Thames Estuary as about equal to the Serpentine or Round Pond. But I have sailed some forty races a year for more than thirty years (omitting the War) on every part of the coast, and have often made a thousand miles of passages besides, and I declare there are few better courses than 'Down Swin' and 'Up Swin'.

I sailed from Southend to Harwich once in the 20-rater Senga, a miserable type of craft compared with a modern 12-metre or 15-metre. She had no cabin accommodation, the owner had forgotten our drink, and our sandwiches fell into the bilge water, of which the Senga had plenty, for her decks leaked and it blew hard and rained incessantly. What a race it was! A tremendous tussle for 50 miles in wind and sea! Charlie Bevis was our skipper and Sycamore came as pilot, so we were handled well and won the match. After we passed the Maplin Spit, there was the devil's own short sea running in the South-west Reach, and the 'Twenties' were throwing such a dust, you could not see for spray. A 2,000-ton steamer lying at her anchor in the Great Nore Channel that day broke her cable. Below Southend it is not always as quiet as the Round Pond, it can do funny things in the Thames Estuary.

But this is by the way. The race I am spinning my yarn about was a calm, quiet race, a day of paltry airs. It was not Britannia's weather at all. How could she win against the White Heather and Nyria? On Friday, July 15, 1921, the previous day, I had also had the honour of sailing with the King over the triangular course I have mentioned. That race was 37 miles, and that was Britannia's weather. She beat the White Heather by ten minutes, and the Bermudian-rigged Nyria by 14 minutes. The presence of the King on board his own yacht in the River Thames in a sailing-match had only occurred once previously in history, when Charles II sailed one of his yachts from Greenwich to Gravesend and back against another owned by his brother James, Duke of York. Now on the Saturday, July 16th, the wind had all gone, and I confess I expected to see the Nyria ghost away from us. As the ebb began to come, the three yachts crept slowly past the Shoebury Sands and left Southend in a dim heat haze astern. Major Hunloke was careful and patient and the crew keen and alert. Three miles below Southend the Britannia was showing her boswprit ahead of the Nyria. The White Heather was not a hundred yards astern. Off the Blacktail Spit, abreast of the Mouse Lightship at two o'clock, the ebb had come pretty strong, and with a nice light breeze the Britannia held her position, and, surely gaining, was three minutes ahead at the Maplin Light. Only a little more than

a cable's length it seemed in distance. The other two yachts were overlapping. Through the South-west Reach, and past the Swin Middle to the shallow point where you enter the East Swin there were light airs ahead and abeam. We were so close to the Nyria and White Heather off the Gunfleet that the King several times conversed with those aboard the other yachts across the calm water. I think it was about abreast of the Gunfleet Light, if my memory is correct, that, although the Nyria had drawn a little out on our weather, a faint breeze seemed to tell upon our jackyard topsail, and it did not take the top of the Nyria's triangular sail. So from the lee berth did the Britannia steadily but surely draw out a commanding lead. The wind freshened until the old ship began to rustle the water and leave a slight white track upon the sparkling diamonds of the sea astern, and we were soon a quarter of a mile ahead of the Nyria. The White Heather was striving hard to catch the Bermudian, and the Britannia was now obviously gaining upon the newer yachts. So they entered that broad lower part of the East Swin, which is appropriately called the King's Channel. His Majesty himself took the wheel, and no sooner had he done so than a jolly breeze piped up. We reached through the King's Channel in a noble procession at high speed. There were no less than five admirals sailing in the Britannia that day, and I remember that when he was steering, the King, more by way of a joke than anything else, told them all to lie flat on the deck with their heads below the weather rail, and down they all went like yachtsmen should. At this moment it was a thrilling spectacle. Gazing aloft the whole contour of Britannia's sail-plan was an absolutely perfect sight to the eye of the yachtsman. The higher sail-plan (as seen in my plate E) was most impressive, a perfect mainsail, the seam of each cloth tracing from luff to leech a perfect parabolic curve, the jackyard-topsail headsails and working jib topsail without a tremble. Her gunwale not quite awash, but the vessel nicely heeled, sheets perfectly trimmed, and the crew with heads below the weather bulwarks all flat upon the deck, the sleek black hull with bow just lifting to the waves, leaving her glistening track in the sun. and alone standing at his wheel the King. His Majesty, being dressed all in white, could be clearly seen by many yachts and craft passing along the

broad highway from the eastern coast to the Thames, and many a cheer was raised on that summer's afternoon for the Britannia. We thundered along from the West Rocks to the Cork, but again it lightened towards the evening. The fast cutter White Heather passed the Nyria as they reached merrily along the Gunfleet, but on all points the Britannia increased her lead that day and won the race; indeed, she was a mile and a half ahead when we made Harwich.

	H.	M.	S.
Britannia (winner)	6	15	16
White Heather (second prize)	6	26	54
Nyria	6	32	38

It was truly a wonderful light weather victory.

A very sporting race—one of many—which turned out to be principally a duel between Britannia and Shamrock, took place last year on June 12, 1928. Our course was from Harwich to Southend, passing up the Thames channel called the Barrow Deeps.

In bygone days yachting men, jolly old sporting fellows, used to sit in the hall or smoking-room of the Royal Thames Yacht Club in Albemarle Street and talk about yachting on the Thames. You might find them, too, in the beautiful old Georgian mansion at Rosherville, by Gravesend, which was the club-house of the New Thames Yacht Club. I think at one time this charming house, long since destroyed, was one of the family houses of a Kent county family called Rosher, from which Rosherville took its name. The Britannia used to lie at a buoy off this club-house when I was young. Rosherville Gardens was an old chalkpit filled with flowers and lit with fairy lamps at night, and I have met pretty girls there when racing was over. But those times are gone, and the gardens also, and all the old Thames yachtsmen too, who knew all about the river and navigated their yachts upon it. Royal Thames and New Thames yachtsmen of the past would yarn in the clubs in Albemarle Street and Rosherville, and their talk was of the great estuary and its channels, tides, and currents and of the racing cutters and yawls they owned. To them there was no place like the estuary of the Thames. Burnham-on-Crouch, as a yachting centre, was not born. There was not enough water for

SHAMROCK, ASTRA, AND BRITANNIA
(*From left to right*)

their fine yachts there. The Thames itself was their love, Gravesend their station, and it remained so until 'Toil, Wealth, Glitter, and Crime on the Flowing Tide' carried them elsewhere. The club-houses are gone, and so are the Thames yachtsmen who sat in the easy chairs in Albemarle Street and consumed much whisky. Now the Royal Thames Yacht Club has much larger and more magnificent premises in Knightsbridge, but few of its members know or care much about yacht-racing on the estuary of the Thames. But in the old days Southend to Harwich, Nore to Dover, and River Match were red-letter days of the yachting season. I used to listen to the talk of the old Thames yachtsmen because it interested me. They had knowledge; their talk was not finnicking sea-lawyer talk about 'protest cases', such as some yachtsmen of the present day delight in—which bores me stiff—it was about the real things of their London river.

The vast spread of the Thames Estuary is a maze of channels between clean hard sands, many of which dry at low water, and nearly all of these sandbanks at low tide are so near the surface that they colour the sea a bright gold in the sun of a summer's day. Roughly and broadly speaking, as you enter the Thames Estuary sailing west, there are three great channels. In order from north to south these are the King's Channel, or East Swin, down which, as I have told, the King steered the Britannia in 1921. Next, the Black Deep, and to the south the Knock Deep. These great channels, old Thames yachtsmen used to say, form smaller channels as you proceed west and narrow the estuary. Place your left hand on the table with the fingers spread out. Your wrist lies towards Gravesend. Your little finger is the 'Swin', or, say, East Swin leading to the West Swin. Then you can remember the five principal channels entering the Thames, for they are like (very roughly, of course) the five fingers of the hand. From north to south: Swin, Middle Deep, Barrow Deep, Black Deep, and Princes. Of course there is a maze of minor channels joining one or the other, and crossing the sands which divide them, such as the North and South Edinburgh, and the Alexandra Channel. Here are some of the finest yacht-racing courses on the British coast, and fairly well-sheltered water, where Thames yachtsmen should cruise and learn the elements of coastal navigation.

The race between Britannia and Shamrock on June 12, 1928, was from Harwich to Southend, and we did not sail up the Swin, but farther south, up the Barrow Deeps. Picture it for a moment, smooth water and a light wind from the west. This means a turn to windward for thirty or forty miles.

That is the test of weatherliness and sailing a boat to windward we had on June 12, 1928, in this race. Can anybody tell me a racing course anywhere on the coast, except perhaps Cowes to Weymouth, where you get a plain turn to windward for 30 or 40 miles on end? Solent, Torbay, Weymouth Bay, Falmouth, Kingstown, Belfast Lough, and the Clyde provide us with our best British yacht-racing, but they do not give us a turn to windward like one may get from Harwich to Southend by way of the Barrow Deeps.

It astonishes me that the modern yachtsmen of the Royal Thames Yacht Club, who have the inheritance and traditions of the old Thames school of Albemarle Street and Rosherville days, should neglect the opportunity of encouraging the magnificent yacht-races which a course like that of Harwich to Southend up the Barrow Deeps affords. They would think me a tiresome old fogey if I said they knew little of the Thames and preferred to disport themselves on Ryde Pier.

So to our Harwich to Southend match of the season of 1928. The yachtsmen of the joint clubs of Southend gave the prize, and the Royal Harwich Yacht Club people started us outside Harwich Harbour off the Platters buoy at eleven o'clock. The length of the course was 48 miles, and we reached the finish off Southend Pier at 4.30 p.m. A more perfect day for yacht-racing could not be imagined, sunny clear weather, a blue sky and fleecy white clouds, a delightful topsail breeze. The Britannia, rigged as shown in the red lines of Plan G, had to allow 1 minute 12 seconds to the two gaff-rigged cutters, Shamrock and White Heather, and 4 minutes 14 seconds to the new Bermudian-rigged cutter Cambria. The latter yacht was William Fife's most recent addition to the racing fleet. She had won her first race on the opening day of the season at Harwich, beating the Britannia and Shamrock handsomely in half a gale of summer wind, but so far as I could judge the new Bermudian was distinctly under-

THE GREAT CUTTER LULWORTH, *EX* TERPSICHORE, LEADING THE FIRST-CLASS VESSELS

canvassed for light or ordinary weather. For the new vessel, however, which was 12 feet shorter than Britannia, to sail all round a triangular course ahead of the old cutter and finish ahead of her in 'Britannia's weather' was a great triumph. Cambria, as the season's racing of 1928 afterwards proved, had insufficient sail area for light winds. The interest taken by yachtsmen in the opening races of the season of 1928 was intense. The questions people were asking were: How will the new Bermudian-rigged yachts Astra and Cambria sail against the gaff-rigged cutters? Will they beat the Shamrock and White Heather? Will the King's old cutter Britannia be completely outclassed? On June 12th there was a right good breeze, the Thames Estuary was as smooth as I have ever known it, with such a smart breeze from south-west to south, and its wide shallows and deep channels were very attractive. The start was before the wind with main-booms squared off to port, and the breeze on the starboard quarter, the starting-line was between the big steam yacht Sona, belonging to Sir William Berry, and the Platters buoy. Old Captain Sycamore made a beautiful start in the Shamrock. He was extremely clever in picking his position about a minute before the starting-gun. He took up a leeward position and then reached up from the leeward end of the line with plenty of way. He was sufficiently wide of the three other yachts to avoid being blanketed, and as the starting-gun fired he bore up through the line exactly with the flash of it. The White Heather drew into the track of Shamrock's wake. The Britannia was upon the White Heather's weather quarter, and the Cambria last and farthest to windward. The start, notwithstanding the length of the race, turned out to be of vital importance. From the Platters buoy to the Cork Lightship is less than 2 miles. It was soon noticeable that we in the Britannia had to run too dead for the Cork to do much good. The more leeward boats, having the breeze more quarterly, gathered more speed than Britannia. The most windward boat, Cambria, the Bermudian, was the deadest before the wind, and she dropped astern. The four vessels thus luffed round the Cork Lightship, leaving it to starboard in this order: Shamrock, White Heather, Britannia, Cambria. Directly they rounded the lightship, where they now turned their course to starboard towards the Thames

Estuary, sheets were trimmed, and they were laid on a close reach on the starboard tack. There was a smart breeze, and the speed about 10 knots. They laid an almost straight line from the Cork Lightship past the Cork Sand buoy to the West Rocks. This was a clean, close-hauled leg of nearly 6 miles, and a pretty good test of speed. The Britannia luffed out a couple of hundred yards wide on to the White Heather's weather quarter. I think her speed just at that moment must have been rather unexpected by Captain Mountefield, the skipper of White Heather, because he did not luff at all to keep Britannia in his wake. I know I was astonished by the speed of the old ship as we stood off for the Cork Sand. The Britannia sailed clean past the White Heather, and gave her a pretty good shaking, and it shivered her sails so that the Cambria reached past the White Heather also. The Britannia now came up on the weather quarter of Shamrock, but she never got on terms with her. Sycamore never let her come wide, but now and then drew his luff and watched us most carefully. It was about 8 miles from our start off Felixstowe sea-front to the West Rock buoy, and we did it in just 50 minutes. At the buoy I timed the four boats: Shamrock 11. 50. 0; Britannia, 11. 50. 40; Cambria, 11. 52. 15; White Heather, 11. 53. 0. Now we trimmed our main-sheets for a dead peg to windward, and it was evident we were in for a great close-hauled race. Two good long tacks were made to fetch the north-east end of the Gunfleet, and then the yachts entered the broad King's Channel, or East Swin, at 12.10 p.m., with the ebb-tide getting slack. For more than thirty years I had not seen such a glorious set-to of cross-tacking as now took place between the big cutters along the Gunfleet. There were miles to go to windward, smooth water, a smart breeze, a glinting sunlit sea. Yacht-racing was revived at last! I had seen such things in my youth in 1893 and 1894, when Britannia and her first rivals were built, but not since. The Shamrock must have weather-bowed the Britannia a dozen times. Can I sketch the race as it passes now for the long miles up to the channel of the Barrow Deeps? The Shamrock about a hundred yards ahead of the Britannia. On these rivals centres the seaman's interest; the White Heather and the Cambria fighting a great battle too, worked further easterly, and perhaps with less wind dropped astern. Folks forget all

about 'time allowances and square roots, and such ritual' when they are in the heat of a great race, and all is a-blowing and a-going. Can the Britannia pass the Shamrock? If she can do so, she will win this match from Harwich to Southend. On the starboard tack, standing off the Gunfleet, Britannia is 150 yards astern and on the Shamrock's weather quarter; gradually foot by foot Britannia creeps up, sailing faster, until she gets within 100 yards or even 80 yards of Shamrock; then she strikes the 'back wind' of Shamrock's sails—the 'back wind' which disturbs the 'vacuum' of our mainsail, about which clever theorists have so much to say and love to talk. But sure enough here is proof, and it is true that every time the Britannia gets within this distance—about 80 or 100 yards—her life deadens, she sails perceptibly slower, and drops back until 200 yards again separates the vessels. Then, having fallen back that distance, she recovers her speed and begins to creep up to the Shamrock again. Not once or twice, but twenty times in exactly the same manner this occurred in the race from Harwich to Southend. What is to be done? Britannia will never pass the Shamrock that way. So Sir Philip Hunloke spins his wheel and slaps her round on to the port tack. Captain Sycamore, watching him like a cat would a mouse, slaps Shamrock round too, and again he holds Britannia on the new tack just as surely as he held her before. Now we are on the port tack, standing towards the Gunfleet Sand, so our helmsman tries ramping her a bit full to endeavour to get through Shamrock's lee, the Britannia eats her way ahead inch by inch with wind clear, but alas! what she gains in 'distance ahead' she loses in 'distance to leeward'; so as they tack again the position is unchanged. Try some other gambit. Sir Philip now tries two very short tacks—tack and tack again within a hundred yards—this is a rare scramble for the crew, all a-hauling on the head-sheets and backstays. Sycamore makes exactly the same manœuvres as his opponent, and twice weather-bows the King's yacht with all the severity possible. So again it is 'Fifty-fifty', but all the time Shamrock holds her advantage. Thus for an hour the battle goes on, helmsmen equally skilful, the professional and the amateur, nothing to choose between them, and the crews of the yachts perfectly matched working with all their energy at the sheets until their hands are sore. One

humorous incident. Britannia, trying one of these sudden short tacks in attempting to take Shamrock by surprise, got one of her preventer backstays jammed, and Sir Philip had to throw her up head to wind to get it clear. Sycamore and Colonel Duncan Neill, ready for any of the old tricks of the game, thought the Britannia was playing them a 'false tack'—that is, to pretend to tack a throw half-round, and to swing back to the same tack as before. If this can be done successfully the leading boat may find herself on the opposite tack to her opponent, and so let her slip away. But it was no false tack Britannia was trying, her weather backstay was caught up, and she was thus forced to lose her way by being held head to wind. Of course Shamrock did not know of our trouble. What did she do? Bless you! they put her head to wind also, to 'wait and see' which tack Britannia was going to fill upon, so that they could make dead certain upon which tack to fill the Shamrock and take our wind as before! So there, for a few seconds, was the curious spectacle of the two great cutters both lying head to wind, with their sails rattling and shaking in the breezes, the Shamrock 50 yards dead ahead of the Britannia, waiting for one another like boxers taking a breather. The Britannia made a semaphore to the Shamrock, 'Thank you for waiting for us until we cleared our backstay'. Then they filled away again, and after trying every ingenuity of racing seamanship, they stood on the starboard tack for the Barrow Lightship, the Shamrock still ahead of the Britannia. The times at the Barrow Deep Lightship were: Shamrock, 1.35.0; Britannia, 1.36.30; White Heather, 1.39.20; Cambria, 1.39.28.

The channel called the Barrow Deeps is about 14 miles long, and it was a dead thresh to windward through two-thirds of it. Then at about 3 p.m. the wind softened in the broiling afternoon sun, and it looked as if there might be some fluking. The Shamrock slowly increased her lead in a long light reach. The White Heather came creeping up until her bowsprit was almost up to Britannia's counter. The Cambria was not two minutes astern, but she lost some distance by having to keep away from a steamer which had a lighter or barge in tow on a long towline. At about 3.15 a thunderstorm, or, as Essex sailors say, a 'tempest', began to darken the sky over the haze of

THE LAUNCH OF THE 24-METRE CUTTER CANDIDA, DESIGNED BY MR. CHARLES NICHOLSON IN 1929 FOR MR. H. A. ANDREAE

the Kentish coast, and out of this the wind began to come in hot puffs, some very fresh, sending us rattling along and cutting up a dust on a broad reach towards the West Oaze, with the breeze south-south-west and south. We had turned to windward for 30 miles, and during the whole race in 5½ hours we sailed perhaps 55 or 60 miles of water. We bore up round the West Oaze buoy: Shamrock, 3.47.0; Britannia, 3.48.52; White Heather, 3.49.14; Cambria, 3.51.11; our lee decks now two planks awash. The last leg of the long match had come, and the wind was such that every vessel was driven at full speed.

Check sheets and let 'em have the weight of it; the four yachts flying like the devil in a straight line from the West Oaze to Southend. Out of the thunder blast from the south-west came the weight of the storm. The Britannia, in a dust of foam and the water churning about the helmsman's feet, caught the Shamrock in a minute and a half, and was almost overlapping her when the winning-gun fired off Southend Pier. On the time allowance, the White Heather beat the Cambria for second prize by 4 seconds and the Britannia by 10 seconds! This was the finish:

	H.	M.	S.
Shamrock (winner)	4	28	8
Britannia	4	28	23
White Heather	4	29	25
Cambria	4	32	31

The corrected time of the race I will record, because it is so extraordinarily close after 5½ hours' sailing:

	H.	M.	S.
Shamrock	4	26	56
White Heather	4	28	13
Cambria	4	28	17
Britannia	4	28	23

It was a race won by Shamrock through the splendid judgment and skill of old Sycamore, and I give him full credit, but the Britannia never won or lost a better sailing-match. For hour upon hour the helmsmen of Shamrock and Britannia jockeyed one another with fairness and skill that it was good to see, and along the Gunfleet they had the glory of this great race to themselves. They ended the day

travelling 12 knots, separated by a length, providing the sightseers with a dramatic finish.

As I sit writing the last lines of this sketch of the Britannia and the yachts against which she has raced, I am sitting at the cabin table of one of them. She is smaller than the Britannia. This yacht is one of the most modern Bermudian-rigged cutters. She is 76 feet long on the waterline. The luff of her triangular mainsail is 131 feet long and the main-boom is 76 feet. Her total sail area by Y.R.A. measurement is 8,259 square feet. It will therefore be gathered that this yacht is 12 feet shorter than the Britannia, and sets 2,000 square feet less sail. This new yacht is about 23·7 metres rating. Measured by the same rule, I suppose the rating of the Britannia would be 26 metres, perhaps a little more. This yacht carries a crew of seventeen hands. The Britannia carries a crew of twenty-nine or thirty hands.

It is very difficult to estimate what is the difference in the average speed of this new yacht, built in 1928, and that of the Britannia, built in 1893, but with her modernized rig, shown by the red lines in Plan G. If anybody could do that accurately, they could then estimate precisely the improvement that designers have made in the design of racing yachts in the last thirty-five years.

But can anybody do it? I find it most difficult. According to the scale of time allowance commonly accepted in Europe and America, if the two yachts were of equal virtue, the Britannia should be able to give the newer and smaller yacht 12 seconds per mile, or 8 minutes on a 40-mile course. Now only upon very rough and stormy days in a big sea could the Britannia possibly give that time allowance to the smaller yacht without a fluke. Then it would be purely on account of the Britannia's size and power that she would win. In a strong wind and smooth sea this new yacht would sail almost as fast as the Britannia.

If the reader looks at Plan G, showing the latest sail-plan of the Britannia in red over the old sail-plan of 1893 in black, he will observe

THE CAMBRIA
A study of the modern Bermudian sail

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the enormous addition to the height of jib-halliard blocks that has been made. This raising of the jib-halliard blocks, as I have already pointed out in Chapter IX, has the effect of causing the Britannia to sail much faster in light winds and moderate winds, and, in fact, faster in most races in smooth water than she was able to sail in 1893. It has caused the headsails to be more effective. It has 'modernized' the rig of the Britannia and brought her more close to new yachts, which also have their jib-halliard blocks so placed.

But another effect of raising these jib-halliard blocks is that the mast is not so strongly supported in the new red sail-plan as it was in the old black sail-plan of 1893. I do not for one moment believe that the Britannia can be driven through a very heavy sea with her headsail blocks in the red position as she used to be when they were in the black position What does this mean? It means this: these alterations have greatly improved the Britannia in average racing weather, but they have spoiled her in very heavy seas. Thus, if I were asked to measure the 'improvement' designers have made in the last thirty-five years, if I were asked the question point-blank, 'What is the amount of the improvement designers have made in first-class cutters in the last thirty-five years?' I should reply that although it is a most difficult question to answer, I estimate it at about 8 seconds per mile. To substantiate this answer I should say that on an average the Britannia might beat this new 76-foot yacht by about 4 seconds per mile. The Britannia, 12 feet longer and of greater rating, should allow this new yacht by the scale 12 seconds per mile. I therefore think the designers have increased the average racing speed of yachts similar to the Britannia by about 8 seconds per mile. This is, of course, allowing the old vessel to modernize her rig. If the original rig of the Britannia shown in the black line of the plates were now used, although she would be a better boat in a really heavy sea—and would thus gladden the heart of our Ocean Racing friends—she would be no use whatever upon an average day against modern vessels. With her modern rig and a handicap allowance of 8 seconds thrown in, the old Britannia will still win as many first prizes as the best of 'em, and she is hard to beat with Sir Philip Hunloke and his men a-handling her. That is

the nearest I can get to an answer to the difficult obtuse scientific question, 'How much have the designers improved racing yachts in the last thirty-five years?' Answer, 'Eight seconds per mile.' The non-scientific yachtsman may reply, "It seems very little.' It is, however, an appreciable amount. We must take into consideration our modern yachts are as strong and more strongly built than Britannia. The new yachts have more cabin fittings, bath-rooms, electric-light engine, ice-box, and goodness knows what. For their size and notwithstanding their rig, they are as good sea-boats as Britannia with her new rig. The new Bermudian-rigged yachts are *not* of such seaworthy rig as the original Watson-rig (with the lower jib-halliard blocks shown in black lines of Plans D, E, F, and G), with which Mr. Willie Jameson and the late John Carter sailed Britannia in 1893, that I will admit as a fact beyond question, but the new yacht's rig is every bit as seaworthy as the red-rig of the Britannia shown in Plan G. Added to this, it must be remembered that we work a modern 24-metre yacht with seventeen crew, whilst Britannia carries twenty-nine or thirty. When wages are £3 per week per man, this is no small consideration for the yacht owner, and yachtsmen should not thoughtlessly declare that yacht designers have achieved little. George Watson was a genius in his time, and his greatest masterpiece was the King's yacht Britannia, but William Fife and Charles Nicholson have improved upon his work.

No clearer proof of this could be found than the official 'handicap' of the racing cutters published in the *Y.R.A. Year Book* of the year 1929. It reads as follows:

Yacht	Rating	Theoretical Speed by the Y.R.A. Scale	Handicap	Speed Figure
	Metres		Secs. per Mile	Secs.
Britannia	25·8	266·8	8	274·8
Shamrock	23·9	276·3	0	276·3
White Heather	23·9	276·3	0	276·3
Astra	23·2	280·1	0	280·1
Cambria	23·2	280·1	0	280·1

The handicap allowed to the old Britannia is 8 seconds per mile. The rest sailed at zero. The 'speed figure' is supposed to represent the number of seconds it will take the yacht to sail one mile. The difference between these Speed Figures is the time allowance one yacht is actually capable of allowing another for one mile. The Britannia alone required the assistance of a gratuity of 8 seconds per mile. This may be accepted as evidence that designers have progressed, and is a general and possibly a not inaccurate estimate of the extent of their progression.

One more thought comes to me as I write in the cabin of this new racing vessel, whose name figures in the above list. There is surely one thing that none of us can estimate. That is the beneficial influence upon the whole sport of yacht-racing due to the entry of King Edward, when Prince of Wales, and King George with the great cutter Britannia. Twice in the history of the sport this vessel has joined in our British regattas round the coast. On each occasion in the year previous to her joining, our beloved maritime sport—a sport as pure and clean as the deep blue sea upon which it is held—was at a low ebb. In 1892 everybody was saying the industry was declining and the sport of first-class racing was almost dead, and it was freely circulated that nobody would ever again build large racing yachts. Then in the following year the Prince of Wales built the Britannia and hoisted his racing colours. The effect was electrical, the whole pastime immediately revived. Again, in 1919, times had changed. The War had so affected the whole industry of British yacht building that yachting people who loved the old sport were in despair. Again the Britannia came to the rescue. The King hoisted his father's racing flag upon her—the time-honoured colours, the Red and Blue, with the White Prince of Wales's feathers in the centre. From the day, in 1920, when she began to try her fortunes against modern vessels, the sport revived. From that day it has never looked back, but continued to improve. The King did all that was possible

to improve the old yacht to keep her abreast of the times and give her a fighting chance against the new yachts. More than a hundred thousand pounds was spent upon building new yachts to race in the Britannia's class, the greatest naval architects have been engaged in their design, the most skilled workmen in the world have been employed upon their construction. In every phase, in every class great and small, yachting in nine seasons attained a higher level of prosperity than had ever been recorded in the whole history of the pastime. The industry in the yacht-building yards was never so great. They are working full time, and the hammers are rattling. There are so many yachts in commission that it is no easy matter to engage a crew! Such is the effect of the example set by our sailor King with the old cutter Britannia. Long may His Majesty's racing colours fly over her, or a similar vessel in the years to come, and long may yachtsmen enjoy the hearty and hard-sailed matches over the sunlit seas between Britannia and her contemporaries.

BRITANNIA'S RECORD

TABLE OF RACES SAILED BY THE BRITANNIA
1893 TO 1928

Year	Number of Times she Started	Number of First Prizes Won	Number of Other Prizes Won	Total Prizes
1893	43	24	9	33
1894	48	36	2	38
1895	50	38	2	40
1896	58	14	10	24
1897	20	10	2	12
Retired from racing	—	—	—	—
1899	6	0	0	0
1913	10	5	0	5
1914	13	8	1	9
The War	—	—	—	—
1920	23	7	4	11
1921	28	9	7	16
1923	26	11	11	22
1924	19	7	5	12
1925	36	6	6	12
1926	23	4	7	11
1927	24	8	8	16
1928	34	9	10	19
	461	196	84	280

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